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# THE INDIAN ARCHIVES

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## DIPLOMATIC OF SANSKRIT COPPER-PLATE GRANTS

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ARCHIVES as a science in India is still in its infancy. Compared to that, the science of diplomatic has not yet been born in this country. Even the meaning of *diplomatic*, as the name of a distinct branch of study, is little known, except to archivists. It has nothing to do with *diplomacy* and is not to be confused with *diplomatic* which is an adjective derived from *diplomacy*. For the exact connotation of *diplomatic*, as the designation of a special science, as also for the history of the origin and development of that science in Europe, the reader is referred to the excellent essay by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th edition, Vol. VIII, pages 300-306), which, I must gratefully record, has been my chief guide in preparing this note.

*Definition*

Briefly, the term *diplomatic* signifies 'a critical study of diplomas'. *Diplomas*, for the purpose of this study, embrace all kinds of documentary sources of history, such as charters, grants, deeds, acts, treaties, contracts and the like. It may be borne in mind that diplomatic is distinct from epigraphy. The two have different functions to perform. Diplomatic concerns itself chiefly with the mode in which an instrument is couched, its form, style and characteristic conventional phraseology, leading to a comparative study of these features in order to distinguish one set or class of records from another. Epigraphy, on the other hand, deals primarily with the interpretation of the contents of an ancient record, taking into consideration its language, palaeography and orthography. The

object of both diplomatic and epigraphy, however, is one and the same, namely, to deduce history, though in doing so the one largely supplements the other.

*History*

The science of diplomatic is new in India in the sense that the immense documentary material, especially stone inscriptions and copper charters relating to the early period, has practically not yet been subjected to a systematic study along truly 'diplomatic' lines. In Europe, this science sprang into being towards the close of the 17th century. And, significantly, the very first beams of its searchlight fell on certain monastic documents. In India, where the material is much vaster in extent and dates from a remoter antiquity, no serious attempt seems to have been made in the past at analysing it that way.

The treatises like the *Lekhapaddhati* (No. XIX of the Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Baroda) and Kshemendra's *Lokaprakāśa,* a few extracts from which are given in Appendix IV to the published edition of the *Lekhapaddhati,* may be considered as attempts in that direction, but they fall short of the standard required. They give specimens of certain types of documents as prevalent in a restricted locality during a particular period. They are late works and take no notice of the Sanskrit copper-plate grants with which we are familiar, not to speak of studying their diplomatic.

*Substance*

"The Roman diploma," Sir Edward informs us, was "so called because it was formed of two sheets of metal which were shut together (Gr. διπλοῦν to double) like the leaves of a book." The grants with which we are concerned here were formed originally in that very fashion. The metal used in their case has all along been copper. As to why copper was singled out for such title-deeds is more than can be said here. This much, however, is certain that, once copper was adopted for that purpose, it became traditional to use that alone. There is an anecdote in Ballāla's *Bhojaprabandha* which sort of corroborates this tradition. The Paramāra king Bhoja, famous for his munificence, once, while out for a ride, came across a Brāhmaṇa who was carrying a leathern vessel for a water-jar. This surprised Bhoja; for, it did not assort well with the high caste of the individual. He stopped the horse in front of the holy personage and asked him the reason. The latter's reply is summed up in the following couplet:

*asya śrī-Bhojarājasya dvayam=eva sudurlabham* |
*śatrūṇāṁ śriṅkhalair lohaṁ tāmraṁ śāsanapatrakaiḥ* || (verse 162).

This hyperbolic utterance, characteristic of classical Sanskrit poetry, signifies that 'while Bhoja is reigning king, iron and copper both have become extremely rare; the former, because large quantities of it have been consumed in forging chains for capturing his foes; and the latter, because it is being largely used for registering the land-grants he is daily making.' This was the reason, so to say, why the learned twice-born was obliged to use a leathern pot instead of a decent bronze jug.

It may be observed that the verse cited above furnishes us with a common Sanskrit term for a land-grant: *tāmra-śāsana-patraka* 'copper grant-leaf' or, in other words 'copper-plate grant', 'a title-deed or charter incised on sheets of copper.' In actual use, we find its variants such as *tāmra-śāsana, tāmra-paṭṭa, tāmra-paṭṭikā, tāmra-phalī,* etc. Very often the first component is omitted, and we have only *śāsana* used in the sense of 'grant' or 'royal grant.' It is sometimes loosely applied also to the land or village granted, when it becomes an equivalent of Persian *inām.* Its use can be traced in quite early works of Sanskrit literature. Vishṇuśarman, for instance, employs it in the very beginning (*kathāmukha*) of his *Pañchatantra,* where he is promised by the king Amaraśakti a reward of a hundred villages, if he made the king's sons proficient in polity. The actual expression used is: *tad=ahaṁ tvāṁ śāsana-śatena yojayishyāmi* 'I shall then confer a hundred *śāsanas* on you.' *Śāsana,* as a written or engraved document, containing a title-deed, an evidence or a certificate of the conveyance of a piece of land or a village, is found employed by Bāṇa in his *Kādambarī* in his description of Chandrāpīḍa's victorious march (*digvijaya*):...... *kurvan kīrtanāni lekhayañ śāsanāñi pūjayann=agrajanmanaḥ* ...., '... erecting temples, causing land-grants to be written, honouring Brāhmaṇas....' (p. 225, 7th edition, "Nirṇayasāgar" Press, Bombay). We have, in fact, instances where kings made donations of lands or villages at holy places, where they had gone on pilgrimage, or at military camps in the course of their warlike expeditions. Such copper-plate grants mention, as their places of issue, the names of the sacred spots (*tīrthas*) and the encampment sites (*vāsaka, skandhāvāra,* etc.), concerned. An explanation as to how the term *śāsana* came to denote 'the land or village granted' is to be found in some of the grants themselves. In stating the fact of a land or village being given as a gift, the phraseology differs in different grants. Some have *tāmra-śāsanen=ātisṛshṭaḥ* 'donated by means of a copper charter.' Others have *agrahārīkṛtya pradattaḥ* 'given, after having made it into an *agrahāra.*' An *agrahāra,* it may

be pointed out, is the proper term for an *inām* land or village. Likewise, in some other grants, we have *śāsanīkṛtya pradattaḥ* 'given, after having made it into a *śāsana*.' It is thus obvious that, while *śāsanena* denoted 'by means of a charter' or 'through the instrument of a written deed', *śāsanīkṛtya* becomes synonymous with *agrahārīkṛtya*, *śāsana* in such a case denoting the same thing as *agrahāra* 'a gift village' or 'a gift land'.

We have just noticed that a diploma was so called because it was formed of *two sheets of metal.* In the case of the Sanskrit copper-plate grants, however, the number as well as the size of such sheets varies largely. The earliest grants so far discovered mostly consist each of three sheets of modest dimensions, the whole set weighing some few ounces. As in the fields of art and literature, the tendency noticeable in the case of these grants also is 'from simplicity to complexity'. The climax is reached in some copper charters belonging to the Chola rulers in the south of India. The Tiruvālaṅgāḍu charter of Rājendra-Chola I (A.D. 1012-1044),[1] for instance, consists of 31 large sheets, strung on a massive ring nearly 17 inches in diameter. The plates and the ring together weigh 200 lbs. or 2½ maunds. This record has been beaten by a very recent find, in the shape of another charter of Rājendra-Chola I himself, from Karandai near Tanjore. It consists of as many as 55 large sheets which alone (without the ring) weigh 216 lbs. It may be observed here that these two lengthy grants are composed partly in Sanskrit and partly in Tamil.

An idea of how a normal Sanskrit copper-plate grant looks may be formed from the accompanying illustration (Pls. I-II). Here we have a perfect specimen. The illustration shows the engraved sides of the plates taken out from the ring on which they were originally strung. It represents the Sāsanakoṭa charter of the Gaṅga king Mādhavavarman I (towards the close of the fifth century A.D.).[2] It consists of 4 plates, each measuring 7 inches broad by 2 inches high and about $\frac{1}{16}''$ thick. Each plate has a ring hole, $\frac{3}{8}''$ in diameter, in the centre of its left-hand margin, through which passed a copper ring. The ring measures $2\frac{3}{4}''$ in diameter. Its two ends are soldered underneath an oval seal of the same metal, measuring $1\frac{7}{16}''$ by $1\frac{1}{4}''$. Its counter-sunk surface bears the figure in relief of an elephant, the insignia of the Gaṅga rulers. The animal is shown standing and facing the proper left.

How the size, the shape, the arrangement of writing, etc., varied

[1] *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1903-04,* pp. 233-5.
[2] *Epigraphia Indica,* Vol. XXIV, pp. 234-9.

in different places as well as in different periods will, by the way, be apparent from the subsequent illustrations (Pls. III-VII), every one of which is given here mainly for the purpose of demonstrating some characteristic traits or special features with regard to the structure of the document. Before we pass on to the question of the structure, we may say a word as to the process of engraving. This is incidentally revealed by a copper plate discovered from a ruined *stūpa* at Kasiā in the Gorakhpur District of the Uttar Pradesh. It bears thirteen lines of writing, of which only the first is engraved, while the remaining ones are written in black ink: 'The inscription was first written out in ink on the plate, and when the ink dried the plate was given to the engraver to cut the written letters into the metal.'[3] The engraving was usually done by a goldsmith or a brazier, which fact was duly mentioned at the close of a charter, as we shall presently see. The job in most cases was neatly done, as will be borne out by the given illustrations.

*Engraving*

The documents with which we are concerned here are in the nature of title-deeds of land-grants. They are royal charters issued in favour of certain individuals, mostly Brāhmaṇas, or religious institutions, such as temples, monasteries or the like. A king, for example, donates a whole village or a piece of cultivable land; and, in proclaiming the donation, he states the occasion, specifies the purpose, describes the donee, lays down the conditions, defines the boundaries and issues instructions to his officials as well as to the people concerned as to the non-infringement of his orders in respect of the donation. In some cases, the king's orders are issued direct by himself, while in others, they are conveyed by a conveyancer. This fact is specifically mentioned in the records, wherever necessary. If certain other formalities are observed, as demanded by special circumstances, these are recorded in detail. The record of the entire transaction is couched in judicial phraseology which follows more or less a set pattern. And, in order that this record may not easily perish, it is engraved on sheets of copper. These, in their turn, for the sake of authentication and to preclude any tampering, are strung on a ring, mostly of the same metal, the two ends of which are secured, by soldering, under a lump of metal, the upper surface of which is flattened and is embossed with the seal of the king. The form, the size and the contents of the seal again vary, which we shall discuss in the sequel. This completed a grant: the engraved copper sheets arranged book-wise and strung on a copper ring,

*Nature*

[3] *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1910-11, p. 74, Plate XXXIX.

the two ends of the ring secured under the royal seal. Any tampering with the seal or the ring would render the grant null and void.

It may be remembered here that the old title-deeds that form the subject of our discussion have now lost all their legal and juridical value (except in the case of certain late grants, whose number is negligible). They have, however, gained immense importance as historical documents. It, therefore, does not matter much if we cut open the ring and take out the copper sheets, which we invariably do in subjecting them to historical examination and specially in photographing, or preparing inked estampages of, the engraved sides thereof for illustrative purposes. This *bona fide* violence to an ancient record has no detracting effect.

*Structure*

We now come to the pith of the matter: the structure of such documents. As we have just remarked, they are couched in judicial phraseology which follows more or less a set pattern. For our purpose, we may split it into three broad sections: *Preamble, Notification* and *Conclusion.* All the Sanskrit copper-plate grants have these three things, though in varying degrees and with certain omissions and alterations of details in each section. The preamble generally comprises (1) invocation, (2) place of issue, (3) name of the grantor with his titles and ancestry, and (4) address. The notification likewise consists of (5) specification of the gift, (6) name of the grantee, (7) occasion, (8) purpose, and (9) boundaries. The conclusion contains (10) exhortation, (11) name of the conveyancer, (12) date, (13) name of the writer, (14) name of the engraver, and (15) authentication. The seal, though superimposed, is considered a part of the authentication itself. We now proceed to consider these sections and subsections, one by one, in the given order.

## PREAMBLE

*Invocation.* As a rule, a charter opens with a *mangala* or an auspicious invocation. This has, by the passage of time, lent itself to a great variety. As is noticeable in the stone inscriptions, the earliest instances of copper charters, too, begin with the well-known formula *siddham.* Literally it means 'accomplished' or 'has been successful', but it may more freely be rendered by 'luck!' The antiquity of the use of this word of magic import is proved by Patañjali's comments, in his *Mahābhāshya,* on the very first of Kātyāyana's *vārttikas* on Pāṇini's *Ashṭādhyāyī.* The *vārttika* in question reads

*siddhē śabd-ārtha-sambandhē,* using *siddha,* in its locative form, to start with. Patañjali draws pointed attention to its use by saying:

> *māṅgalika āchāryō mahataḥ śāstr-aughasya*
> *maṅgal-ārthaṁ siddha-śabdam āditaḥ prayuṅktē*

'The auspicious teacher, desirous of success, employs the word *siddha* at the very outset for auspiciousness to the great volume of the scientific treatise (undertaken by him)'.

It was indeed traditional in olden days for a pupil, when he was initiated in the art of writing, to start with this very *siddham.* An echo of this tradition is found in a story related in the *Divyāvadāna,*[4] a well-known collection of early Buddhist legends. The relevant part of the story may, in translation, read like this: "They named the baby boy Panthaka. When he grew big enough, he was taken to the teacher for learning *lipi* or the art of writing. His memory was, however, so slippery that it could not retain the two syllables *si* and *dham.* Speak *si,* and he would forget *dham,* and *vice versa.*" Obviously, the pupil was required, before learning to write any letter of the alphabet, to learn writing the word *sidham* (which, of course, is the Prakrit, and thus a more popular form of the Sanskrit *siddham*). The purpose in so doing has always been to have an auspicious start, spelling success or fortune.

It may, in passing, be remarked that our earliest grants are in Prakrit or in Prakrit and Sanskrit mixed. And they do begin with this luck-spelling formula of *siddham.*[5] Later on, this verbal formula assumed also a symbolic form, the symbol consisting of a mere flourish or a spiral, while, at the same time, certain other auspicious formulas, such as *om* and *svasti,* also made their appearance. Some scribes were not satisfied with only one such formula. They used more than one. The auspicious syllable *om* also began to be expressed by a special symbol. This created a confusion, as a result of which one and the same symbol is read as *siddham* by some and as *om* by others. Attention is invited to a brief but illuminating note on this point by the late Dr. N. K. Bhattasali.[6]

As time rolled on, this invocation affair was extended from mere syllables and words to passages and whole verses in praise of the

[4] Edited by E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil, Cambridge, 1886, p. 486.

[5] See, for instance, the Hīrahaḍagalli plates of the Pallava King Śivaskandavarman, and the Bāsim plates of the Vākāṭaka king Vindhyaśakti II, in the *Epigraphia Indica,* Vol. I, p. 5 and Vol. XXVI, p. 151, respectively.

[6] *Ep. Ind.,* Vol. XVII, p. 352.

favourite deities of the grantors, some of which have poetic glamour about them. Herein we have a beginning of the growing complexity.

Let us have a few illustrations of the *maṅgala*. The Sāsanakoṭa charter (Pl. I) begins with the spiral symbol, denoting *siddham*, followed by a passage, hailing the god Vishṇu: *jitam bhagavatā gata-ghana-gagan-ābhena Padmanābhena.* The Chittagong plate of Kānti-deva (Pl. III) begins with the flourish, denoting likewise *siddham*, followed by the word *svasti.*[7] The symbol of *siddham* or *om* in the beginning of the Prince of Wales Museum plates of Dadda III (Pl. IV), which likewise is followed by the word *svasti*, is again different in shape.[8] The Īpūr plates of Mādhavavarman (Pl. V) have simply *svasti* for invocation.[9] Instances of the elaborate type of invocation are quite numerous. A sample may be seen in the Rewah plates of Trailokyamalladeva, which begin with *Oṁ namaḥ Śivāya Gaṇapataye namaḥ* followed by three invocatory verses, the first praising Krishṇa, the second Śiva and the third (borrowed from Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa*) Sarasvatī.[10]

*Place of Issue.* After the invocation, the scribe usually mentions the name of the place from which a charter is issued. In most cases, the capital city or the seat of government is the place of issue. Sometimes it happens to be a royal camp, either in the course of a military expedition or on a pilgrimage. We know from the passage quoted from Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* how princes used to issue grants while advancing on their victorious marches. As in the case of invocation, so in mentioning the place of issue, too, the writer of a charter often finds excuse enough to display his poetic propensities. He enlarges upon the theme so much that we have often a charming description of the city or the camp, buzzing with life and overflowing with wealth, instead of a mere prosaic mention of its name.

It may be pointed out that, in many charters, the place of issue is not mentioned at all—it is taken for granted there, while in some others, it occurs not immediately after the invocation, but after the name of the grantor and all that goes with it. The following instances will make the point clear.

Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) has simply *Śrī-Bharukachchhāt* 'From the prosperous (city of) Bharukachchha' without any embellishment. So has Kāntideva's plate (Pl. III) only *Śrīmaj-jaya-skandhāvārāt Varddha-māna-pura-vāsakāt* 'From the glorious and victorious camp-residence

[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 317.
[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVII, p. 199.
[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, p. 336.
[10] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXV, p. 5.

at the city of Vardhamāna.' Mādhavavarman's Īpūr charter (Pl. V) likewise has *Vijaya-skandhāvārāt Kuḍāvāḍa-vāsakād* 'From the victorious camp pitched at Kuḍāvāḍa', not after the invocation, but after the king's name (in text line 8). The Śāsanakoṭa plates (Pls. I-II), on the other hand, omit this item altogether. An instance of the elaborate mention of the place of issue may be found in the Sonepur plates of Janamejaya, where the invocation is followed by a long prose passage, covering nine lines of writing, describing the place of issue: *amala-maṇi-kuṭṭima-sadana ..... śrīmad-Ārāmād,* 'From the prosperous Ārāma, which .....'[11]

*Name of the Grantor.* This item in the preamble has proved to be the most prolific source of history, specially dynastic and chronological ; for, it is here that a charter-scribe is found expatiating most. In earlier grants the name of the royal donor is coupled with a title or two, besides the name of his father and occasionally also of his grandfather. This bare outline has progressively expanded into descriptive genealogies and strings of epithets in later charters. The theme readily lent itself to the art of poetry and as a result we have substantial portions of grants filled with racy and ornate descriptions, in prose or in verse, introducing the grantor. His military exploits and those of his ancestors have received special attention. This fashion grew to such an extent that a scribe often felt impelled to attribute vague and imaginary victories where actually none was due. Physical charms as well as qualities of head and heart, real or otherwise, have been given equal importance in such descriptions. However irrelevant such eulogistic narrative might have been to the concerned title-deeds when these were yet legally valid, their significance at present is manifold. Even their fancies and hyperboles have their own value, for poetics, if not for pure history. They shed welcome light on many an obscure aspect of a past event, and thereby enrich history. A few examples will illustrate their nature.

The whole of the Śāsanakoṭa charter (Pls. I-II) consists of 24 lines of writing. Of these, the first eleven are devoted to mentioning the grantor. Immediately after the invocation, the grantor's family, Jāhnaveya *kula,* is mentioned (in line 2), then his *gotra,* Kāṇvāyana (in line 4), then his father's name, Koṅgaṇivarman (in line 5), and this is followed by his own name, Mādhavavarman (in line 11). The intervening space is filled with jingling prose, describing the father and the son. Mark, for example, the alliteration in *sva-bhuja-javaja-jaya-janita-sujana-janapadasya,* 'of one who has produced lands

[11] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXIII, p. 250.

(inhabited) with good people by the conquests born of the impetuosity of his own arms.' This is one of the attributes of the father. Which lands, when conquered, how, etc., are naturally the things an historian is least concerned with in such a case as this. The eloquent statement may, on the other hand, be a delight to a votary of Polyhymnia.

In Kāntideva's grant (Pl. III), which is incomplete, lines 4-16 describe the grantor and his parents, father Bhadradatta and mother Vindurati. The description consists of six ornate verses followed by a prose passage. After the invocation and the mention of the place of issue in line 1, the scribe gives another invocatory verse in praise of the Buddha, under the name of Jinendra, in order to show that the person described thereafter, namely Bhadradatta, was a follower of the Buddha.

In Dadda's charter (Pl. IV), on the other hand, we find not only the father or parents, but some of his distant ancestors as well. The description is in prose throughout, which is in the style of Bāṇa's *Kādambarī,* and covers the first 14 lines of the total 30.

In the charters of certain other dynasties, such as Kalachuri, Rāshṭrakūṭa, Maitraka, Choḷa, Chālukya, Paramāra and Pāla, we have extensive genealogical descriptions, preceding the grantor's name. They are usually fanciful, but do contain pieces of vital information as well. Those of the Eastern Chālukya rulers give even the length of each ruler's reign, precisely in years, months and days.

*Address.* The royal order is addressed to certain dignitaries and officials as also to the rural inhabitants who are immediately concerned with the land or village donated, as rate-payers. The list of state officials, which in many cases happens to be a pretty lengthy one, is highly instructive, specially with regard to the administrative history. The officials addressed do not belong to the revenue department alone, but include also those of the police, the judiciary, the military, and the royal household. In this way, one often gets a more or less complete picture of the administrative machinery of a particular state. Many of the official designations still present difficulty as to their correct connotation.

In addressing his officials and the ryot, the king often shows the courtesy of greeting them and enquiring after their welfare before issuing the command. As required by legal etiquette, the royal donor himself, in most cases, is described as *kuśalin,* which literally means 'in good health', but which carries with it the implication that the donor was in his full senses and was not under the influence of some disease or intoxicant while making the donation so that the

title-deed issued in favour of the donee might be recognised as a fully valid document, legally speaking.

The item of address is totally absent in some charters, while in some others it is worded differently from what has been adumbrated above, as may be clear from the following instances.

The Śāsanakoṭa plates (Pls. I-II) omits the address altogether. The Chittagong charter (Pl. III) has *śrīmān Kāntidevaḥ kuśalī Harikelā-maṇḍale bhāvi-bhūpatīṁs=tad-ātma-hitam=idaṁ bodhayati viditam=astu vaḥ* 'the illustrious Kāntideva, being in good health, informs the future kings of Harikelā *maṇḍala* as follows, for their own good: "Be it known to you'." The expression *viditam=astu vaḥ, viditam=astu bhavatām, astu vaḥ saṁviditam,* or the like, is of most frequent occurrence, calling attention to the notification that follows immediately. In the case of Kāntideva's charter, it may be observed, that it ends with the expression *viditam=astu vaḥ* itself. In other words, this charter consists only of the preamble and lacks in the other two sections, the *Notification* and the *Conclusion,* though it is provided with the royal seal. It is in that sense an incomplete record. It is guessed that 'such unfinished plates were kept ready in office and filled in with the remaining portion at the time of the actual grant'.[12] We know of more instances of such a practice of keeping *blanks* in readiness.

The address in Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) follows the set formula more closely: *śrī-Daddaḥ kuśalī sarvvān-eva rāja-sāmanta-bhogika-vishayapati-rāshṭra-grāma-mahattar-ādhikārik-ādīn samanudarśayaty=astu vaḥ saṁviditam.* The persons addressed herein include the contemporary rulers and the chiefs of the contiguous territories besides the grantor's own officers, but not the ryots. The Īpūr charter (Pl. V), on the other hand, is addressed only to the ryots, the residents of the village granted: ..... *grāma-janān sarvvān=evam=ājñāpayati.* The expressions *kuśalī* and *viditam=astu vaḥ* are missing in this record. For a more perfect example, we may refer to the Svalpa-Velura grant of the Gaṅga king Anantavarman,[13] wherein the long list of officers is headed by the Brāhmaṇas and the expressions used are: ..... *kuśalī ... yath-ārhaṁ mānayaty=ādiśati cha viditam=astu bhavatām,....'* being in good health, duly honours and commands ...' The corresponding passage in the Baripada Museum plates of Devānanda[14] has: .... *yath-ārhaṁ mānayati bodhayati kuśalayaty=ādiśati cha,* 'duly honours, intimates to, enquires after the health of, and commands .....' In

[12] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXVI, p. 314.
[13] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXIV, p. 135.
[14] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXVI, p. 79.

these last two examples, the persons addressed by the royal donor include both officials and villagers.

### NOTIFICATION

Notification is the central theme of a charter. As shown above, its contents can be divided into five main items: specification of the gift, name of the grantee, occasion, purpose and boundaries. It may be added that these items do not always occur in the order stated. Besides, all the charters do not necessarily have all the five items. Since the circumstances in each grant happened to be different, the recorded details must necessarily differ widely. We shall illustrate these after explaining the nature of the five items of our classification.

*Specification of the Gift.* The gift usually consists of a village. Occasionally more villages than one are donated ; and conversely, not a whole village, but a field or a number of fields constitutes the gift. In any case, the grant specifically states its name and location, district or some other territorial division, *vishaya, maṇḍala, bhukti, vīthī, pattalā,* or the like. Often the donated fields bear proper names; otherwise the extent of the plot granted is specified in the current measure, *hala, nivartana, pādāvarta, kulyavāpa,* etc.

*Name of the Grantee.* This means the party in whose favour the land is alienated. The party may consist of a single individual or a number of individuals. We have instances of land-grants, where hundreds of donees have to share one *agrahāra.* As stated already, such donees are usually Brāhmaṇas. While recording their names, the grants often mention the names of their fathers, *gotras, pravaras, charaṇas* and the particular Vedic schools to which they belong. Occasionally the place from which a donee originally hailed is also recorded. In the event of a temple or a monastery being the beneficiary, the deity or the committee concerned is so named.

*Occasion.* Since these donations are mostly of a religious character, they are made often on such occasions as a particular *saṁkrānti,* an eclipse of the sun or of the moon, a fast, a feast, a specially holy function, etc. A visit to the sacred spot, a temple or a confluence of rivers equally marks the occasion for a charity. Cases are also known where a gift of land is given at the instance of the donor's mother, wife or some other relative, which implies that the resultant merit is to go to the person in whose behalf the gift is made. It goes without saying that all gifts were sanctified by the libation of water—*udaka-pūrvam, saliladhārā-puraḥsaram* or *udakātisargeṇa*—,

as required by the rituals, to ensure the religious merit to the desired individual.

In some grants, no such occasion is detailed, while in some others, only the date of the grant, either in the regnal year of the donor or according to some era, takes its place.

*Purpose.* The purpose of a grant is likewise clearly stated, which is generally two-fold: the accretion of merit to the donor, and a certain obligation on the donee. In most cases a donor specifically states in the grant that he has given a particular gift for the increase of the religious merit of his parents and of himself, or for ensuring longevity, strength, glory and prosperity to himself. As for the donee's obligation, he is charged with the duties of performing daily rites, conducting worship, feeding monks, or the like, as the case may be in a particular grant, the expenses involved being met from the income derived from the donated land. Where no such return is desired, and the donee is to enjoy the gift as he pleases, the fact is so mentioned. His rights, privileges, exemptions and immunities, concerning the land granted, are clearly stated. In some cases, certain taxes have to be paid by the donee. Besides, he is seldom allowed the right to deal arbitrarily with offenders and thieves. Such rates and reservations are normally specified in the grants.

*Boundaries.* The parcel of land or the village granted often happens to have its boundaries already well-known to the villagers around. In such a case no boundaries are defined at all, or else the fact that it goes with its well-known limits is so mentioned. Otherwise its boundaries, *sīmāḥ, āghāṭāh, āghāṭanāni,* etc., are properly defined. For this purpose, mostly natural land-marks are resorted to, such as hillocks, brooks, prominent single trees or groves, and are noted in the charter concerned. Where a large area is involved, the job of defining boundaries becomes an elaborate affair. A regular *kariṇī-bhramaṇa* is undertaken, which means a high official seated on a she-elephant, followed by a number of subordinates, takes a ride round the land to be alienated, the subordinates marking off the boundary and noting down the details as the procession proceeds. This sort of procedure is known from certain South-Indian records such as those of the Chola monarchs.

Let us now notice a few concrete examples. The notification in the Sāsankoṭa charter (Pl. I), in translation, reads as follows: "on the 10th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Phālguna in the first year of his own (reign) with his extensive sovereignty ever on the increase, (*the illustrious Mādhavavarman*) has given to Dhara-

śarman of the Vatsa *gotra* and the Taittirīya *charaṇa*, for his own welfare, the village, named Velputtoru, in the district of Paru, as a gift to a Brāhmaṇa, carrying all the (customary) exemptions, with the libation of water." The notification in Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) is of a more detailed nature. It is quite a lengthy one, but we may notice its salient points. It begins with the statement of purpose which is 'the increase of glory and merit, in this world and hereafter' for the donor and his parents. Then come the names of the district and the granted village with the specification of the rights to be enjoyed by the donee, including the collection of various taxes in cash and kind. The gift is a perpetual one to be enjoyed by the donee and his descendants. Then follow the names of the donee, his father, *gotra*, place of origin, etc. The libation of water is mentioned last. The occasion of the gift, the mention of which was omitted at this place, is stated towards the end, just before the mention of the year, as a supplement. This is remarkable inasmuch as it gives the additional information that the gift was accompanied with an elephant and a chariot. The occasion bespeaks its propriety, as it was the *Ratha-saptamī*, 'the Chariot-seventh day', the 7th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Māgha, on which day, whatever its astrological significance, the gift of vehicles is supposed to assure the donor an abundance of vehicular luxury in his future birth. Instances of notifications wherein boundaries are also stated may be found in other records such as the Chevūru charter of Amma I.[15] This particular record happens to be noteworthy in some other respects as well. The donee here is not a Brāhmaṇa but a warrior who receives the gift of a village in addition to certain high distinctions as a reward for his meritorious services and devotion to the king. The occasion of the gift is the *annaprāśana* ceremony[16] of the baby prince.

## Conclusion

Like the preamble, the concluding part of a charter is historically important for the incidental details it contains, though it might not have been so very material to the title-deed as such. The broad sections into which we have divided such details are six: exhortation, name of the conveyancer, date, name of the writer, name of the engraver and authentication. The remarks made in connection with

[15] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVII, p. 46.

[16] This occurs during the sixth month after the child's birth; see *Manusmṛti*, *Adhyāya* II, v. 34.

the notification, as to the change of order or optional omission of certain details, apply to the conclusion as well.

*Exhortation.* The notification of a grant is usually followed by words of exhortation or admonition, addressed by the royal donor to the future kings of his own house, to the contemporary rulers, to those who might replace him or his descendants by conquest, to his own officials and dependants, as also to his subjects, especially the villagers vitally concerned with the land granted, to the effect that they should all respect the grant made by him. The last-named group is specially advised thereafter to pay all their dues—taxes and revenues, in cash and kind—regularly to the grantee and live amicably with him. These appeals and warnings are reinforced by allusions to the ephemeral nature of worldly existence, to the permanency of *dharma*, to the merit and good reward that might result from honouring and maintaining the grant, and to the hell and suffering that might befall those who would, on the other hand, confiscate or violate it. In this context, various benedictory and imprecatory verses are quoted from the *Mahābhārata* and the *dharmaśāstras*. A goodly collection of such verses, culled from old Sanskrit copper-plate grants, may be found in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1912, pp. 248-254, 476 ; and 1913, pp. 388. A more representative one, by Sri P. V. Kane, in Hindi, may be seen in the *Bhāratīya Anuśīlana* (Ojha Presentation Volume, Allahabad, 1933), Section V, pp. 3-15.

Let us see what the examples selected by us contain by way of exhortation. The Sāsanakoṭa charter (Pl. I-II) has a prose passage, threatening the confiscator of the grant with the infliction of the five major sins.[17] This is followed by three corroborating verses, here ascribed to Manu. The exhortation in Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) is more elaborate, covering as it does about nine lines of writing, out of the total of thirty (text lines 20-28). Here a long prose passage is followed by four customary verses, ascribed to Vyāsa. In the prose passage, which is highly ornate, it is first stated in a general way that nobody should interfere with the grantee who, it is declared, is at liberty to enjoy the land granted in whatever way he pleases, by tilling it himself or by leasing it out to someone else. Next, the grantor addresses the future kings of his own lineage as well as others, asking them to accord their approval to the grant made and to maintain it, thinking that the merit of the grant is equally to be shared by them, that

[17] The *dharmaśāstras* recognise five major sins and as many as fifty-one minor sins, *mahāpātakas* and *upapātakas*. Regarding their nature, see the *smṛitis*, *e.g.* of Manu and Yājñavalkya, XI 54, and V, 229-36 respectively

fortune is fickle and that life is impermanent. Lastly, the confiscator is threatened, as usual, with the infliction of the five major sins. The Īpūr plates (Pl. V) have a much simpler exhortation. Herein the king's men are advised to collect no rent from the village granted and to see that it is duly protected. One of the customary verses is then quoted, but it is preceded by the name of the *conveyancer*, the significance of which we now consider.

*Name of the Conveyancer.* The word conveyancer is to be understood here in its literal sense, 'one who effects the conveyance', and not in its usual technical sense, 'lawyer who prepares documents for conveyance of property.' Perhaps the term *messenger* conveys the idea better, the original Sanskrit being *dūta* or *dūtaka.* It has been observed that the king's order as to the grant of a village or land is issued not always by the king personally. It is more often conveyed through an intermediary. This important function is entrusted to a high officer, occasionally even to the prince royal. In the event of such an order emanating from the king himself, the fact is so mentioned, and the phrase used is *ājñā svayam, sva-mukh-ājñā,* or the like, 'order himself', 'order from his own mouth', etc. The Sāsanakoṭa charter (Pls. I-II) is an instance of this. It has *sva-mahārāja-mukh-ājñāptyā* (correct grammar requires *mahārāja-sva-mukh-ājñāptyā*), which is more explicit and means 'by the order from the Mahārāja's own mouth.' Dadda's charter (Pl. IV) does not mention this item, while in the Īpūr plates (Pl. V) the royal donor's own son figures as the agent: *asy=ājñā priya-putraḥ Mañchyaṇṇabhaṭṭārakaḥ,* 'its order is (the king's) dear son, His Highness Mañchyaṇṇa'. The Svalpa-Velura grant has the illustrious *Mahāsāmanta* Aśokadeva as its *dūtaka,* the title *Mahāsāmanta* indicating a high dignitary.[18]

*Date.* The simple item of dating a charter again presents some variety. In many charters no date is given at all, while in others only the year is recorded. The year mentioned may be a regnal one or it may be according to some era prevalent in that particular region at the time of the grant. Where fuller details are given, we have reference to the month, the fortnight, the day, but seldom to the week-day. When the week-day also happens to be specified, the date can be verified and its equivalent, say in the Christian era, can be ascertained precisely. Occasionally the date of the actual grant happens to be different from the one on which the document is engraved on the plates. The date of the grant very often finds a place in the *Notification* itself, and is not repeated in the *Conclusion,* as in the case of the Sāsanakoṭa

[18] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 136.

charter (Pls. I-II), for example. This is dated in the first regnal year of the donor. And, though it specifies the month (Phālguna *māsa*), the fortnight (*śukla paksha*), and the date (*tithī daśamī*), it cannot be verified for want of the week-day and a well-known era. Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) mentions a date which gives a more definite clue. It states the year, *Saṁvat* 427, which, it has been possible to ascertain, follows the Kalachuri reckoning and corresponds to A.D. 675. The day of the grant is stated to be the *Ratha-saptamī*, the 7th day of the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha. The Īpūr charter (Pl. V) is again dated in the regnal year, and the date is mentioned right at the end: *pravarddhamāna-vijaya-rājya-saṁvatsare saptātriśe* (*saptatriṁśe*) *gi pa 7 di X V*, 'in the thirty-seventh year of the reign of increasing victory, the 15th day of the 7th fortnight of the hot season.' The abbreviations *gi*, *pa* and *di* used here deserve special notice. They stand respectively for *grīshma* 'hot season', *paksha* 'fortnight' and *dina* 'day'. This practice is followed in many charters. Again, what is of interest for the history of astronomy is the mention, in earlier charters, of seasons as subdivisions of a year, instead of months.

*Name of the Writer.* The task of drafting or writing out a charter was, as a rule, entrusted to a responsible official. His name and occasionally also his designation are duly mentioned. He often gives his father's name, too. This factor has proved helpful in some cases, especially in determining the chronology of certain rulers whose order of succession was otherwise indeterminate. A part of the chronology of the Gaṅgas of Śvetaka has, for instance, been established that way.[19]

In this connection, the Sāsanakoṭa plates (Pls. I-II) simply state *Somaśarmmaṇā likhit=eyan=tāmra-paṭṭikā*, 'this copper-plate (*charter*) has been written by Somaśarman', while Dadda's grant (Pl. IV) has *likhitaṁ mahāsāndhivigrahādhipatinā Durggabhaṭasūnunā Saṅgullena*, '(*this*) has been written by Durgabhaṭa's son Saṅgulla, the Chief Officer of Peace and War (or the Minister of External Affairs).'

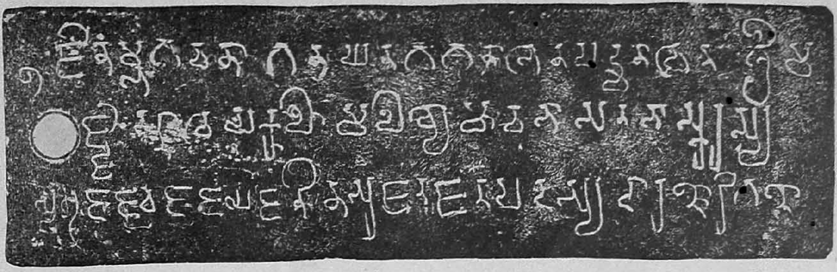
*Name of the Engraver.* While the function of drafting a document was admittedly of sufficient importance to make the name of the scribe figure prominently in it, the job of copying it on the sheets of copper and engraving it was more or less a mechanical process hardly justifying such an exaltation of the brazier or goldsmith responsible for it. And yet it was evidently a common practice in India to acknowledge the engraver's help by making a suitable mention of his name in a charter. This throws a welcome side-light on the social history of the country. Evidently the society in those days recognised

[19] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXV, p. 240.

the worthiness of all useful occupations and accorded each its due share of respect. We have instances in certain Chola grants where the writer and the engraver also receive each a share in the land granted, presumably as fees for the services rendered by them.

Sometimes it is difficult to interpret with certainty the word *likhitam* in the original, which literally means 'written'. Though very often it refers to the drafting or composing of the record, yet in some cases it alludes to the copying of the draft on the metal sheets for the guidance of the smith who was charged merely with the engraving of it. Thus there were three different processes involved: composing, writing and engraving. An instance where *likhitam* stands for writing, as distinct from 'composing' is supplied by the Salem charter of Śrīpurusha. It ends with *sarvva-kal-ādhāra-bhūta-chitrakal-ābhijñena Guruśishyeṇ=edaṁ śāsanaṁ likhitam,* 'this charter has been written by Guruśishya, an expert in the art of painting, the basis of all arts'.[20] A look at the facsimiles of the plates will bear it out that the elegant forms of the letters did require a skilled artist to write them in ink for the guidance of the engraver. In this instance the names of the composer and the engraver are not mentioned. Hammering the metal into plates or sheets good enough to receive the engraving was another process in which the engraver was assisted by another metal worker. Some charters mention the name of such an unskilled or semi-skilled worker as well. The Neulpur grant of Śubhākara[21] informs us that 'it was written by the *Mahākshapaṭalika Bhogika* Brahmadatta; heated by the *peṭṭapāla* Nārāyaṇa; and incised by the *taṭṭhakāra* Eḍadatta.' By 'heated' here is meant 'shaped into a plate by heating the metal.' What exact occupation is meant by *peṭṭapāla* has not yet been ascertained, while in *taṭṭhakāra,* likewise a Prakrit form (Sanskrit *tashṭakāra*), one may easily recognise the Hindi *ṭhaṭherā* and the Panjabi *ṭhaṭhyār,* which means 'brazier' or 'copper-smith'. The proper expression, denoting 'engraved', in Sanskrit is *utkīrṇa,* and this is what is used in the Neulpur grant as well as in most of the other Sanskrit copper-plate grants. Bharatabala's charter[22] has *utkīrṇaṇ=cha suvarṇṇakār-Eśvara-putreṇa Mihirakeṇa* 'and *(it)* has been engraved by the goldsmith Īsvara's son Mihiraka.' Besides *tashṭakāra* and *suvarṇakāra,* we have other smiths as well mentioned as engravers, such as *kāṁsyakāra* (Hindi *kaserā*), 'worker in white brass.'

[20] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXVII, p. 150.
[21] *Ibid.,* Vol. XV, p. 5.
[22] *Ibid.,* Vol. XXVII, p. 143.



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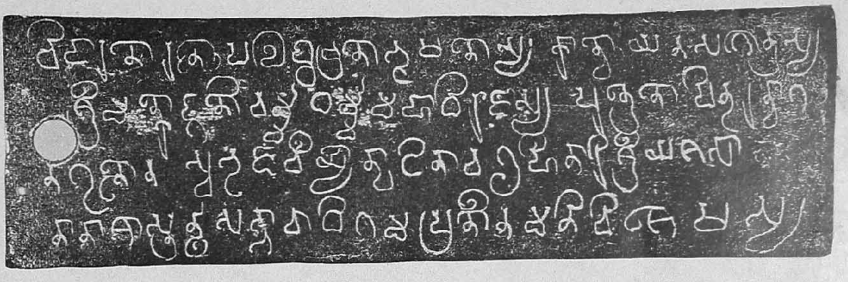

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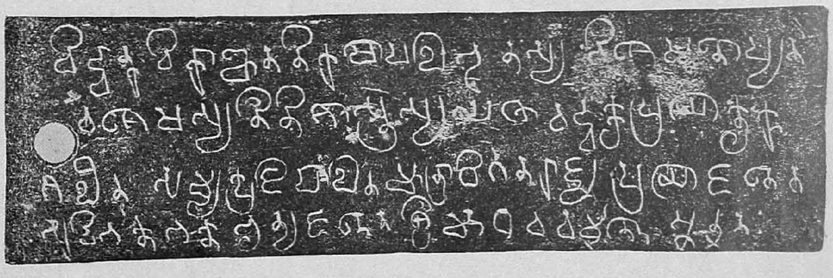

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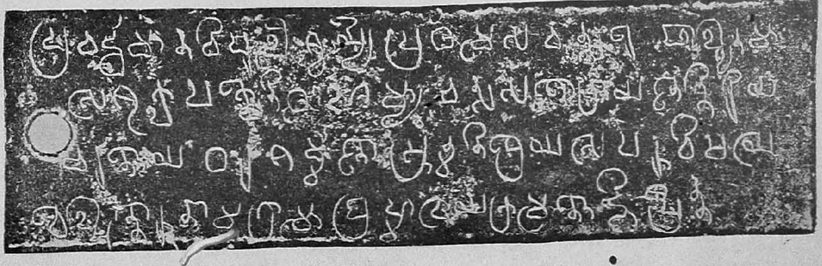

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Sāsanakoṭa Plates of Gaṅga Mādhavavarman: 1st year

*Scale: Three fourths; a=Obverse, b=Reverse.*

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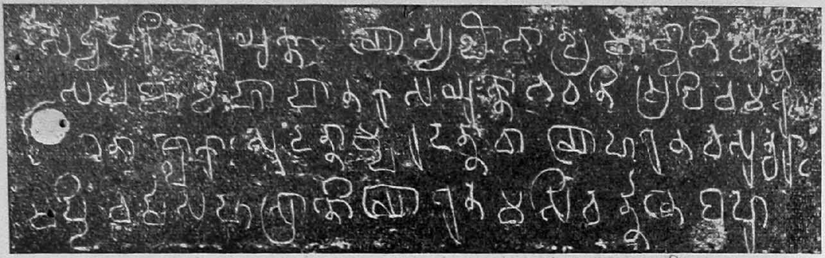

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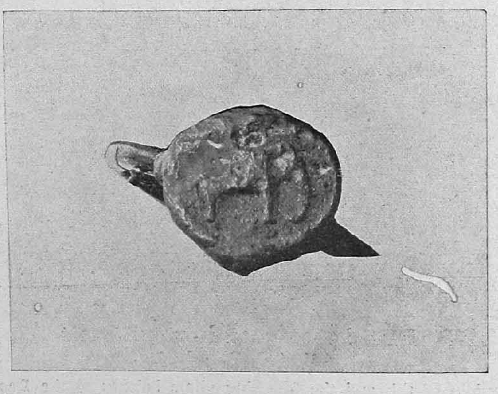
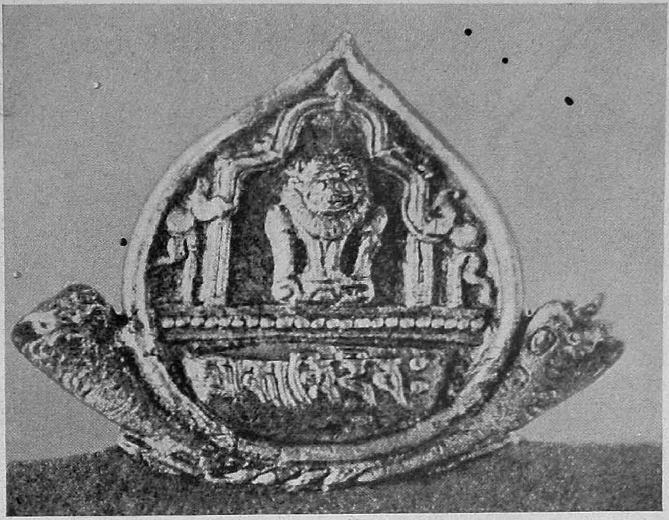
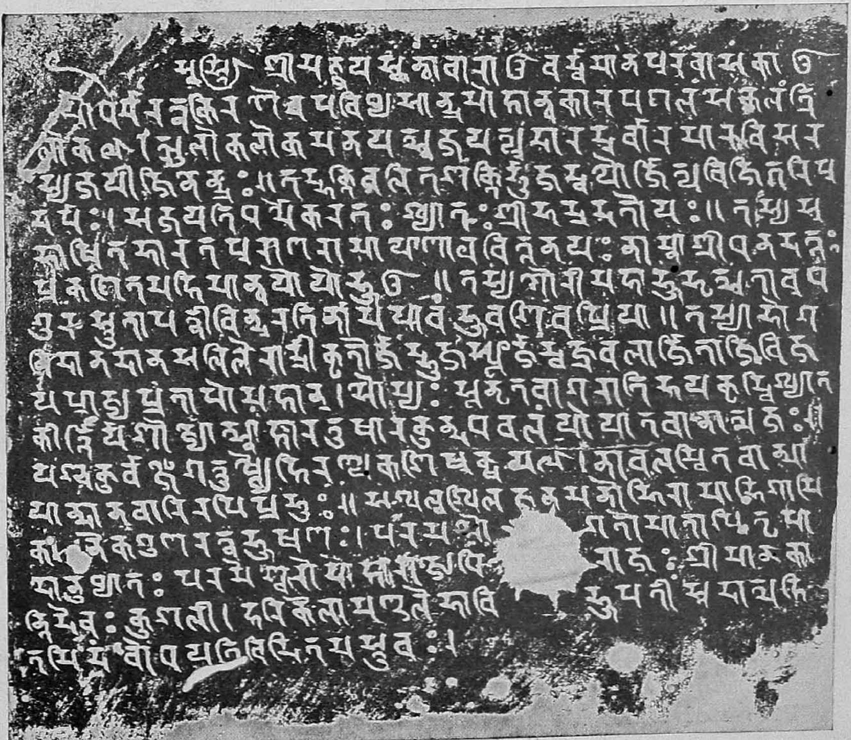
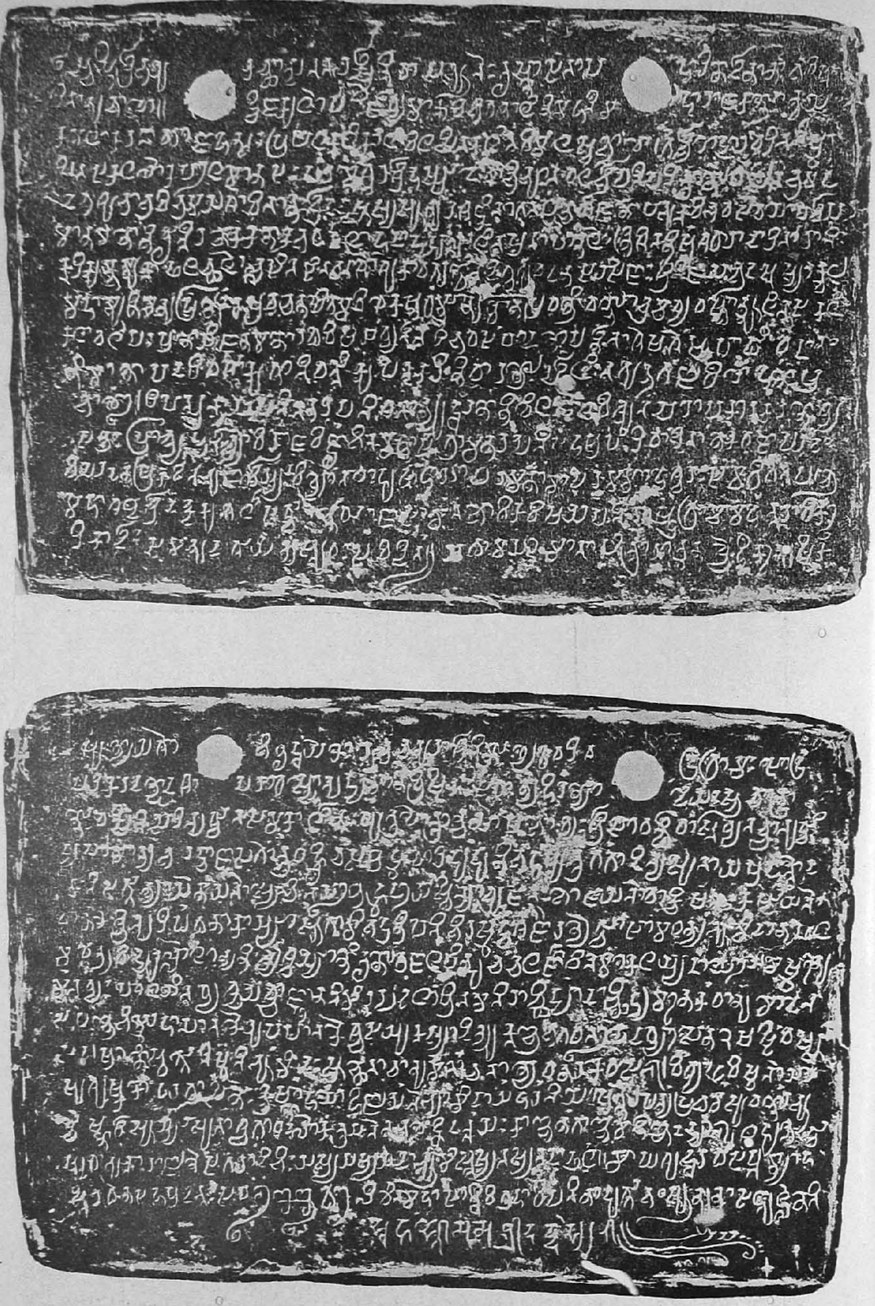


Sāsanakoṭa Plates of Gaṅga Mādhavavarman: 1st year (contd.) with Seal (bottom)



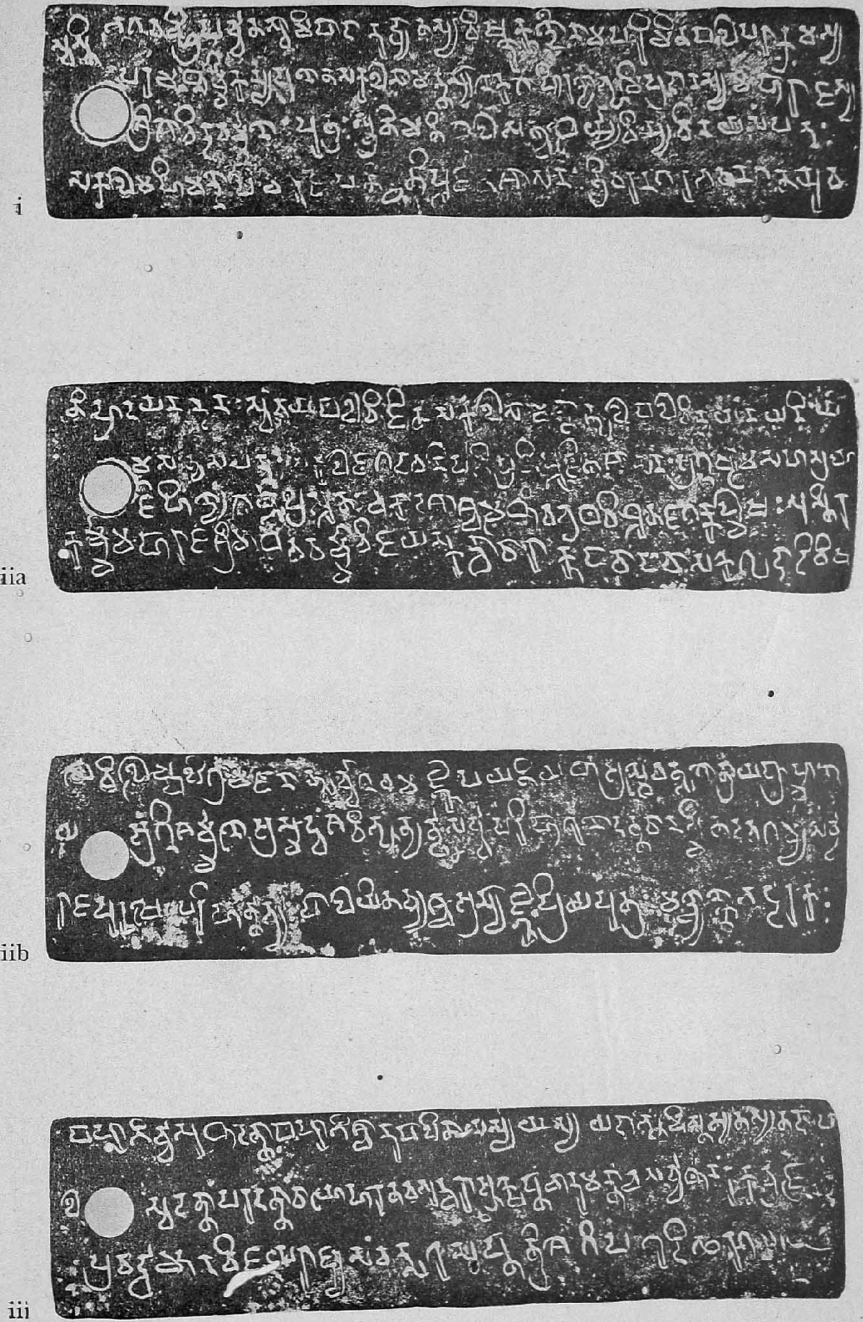


Chittagong Copper-plate of Kāntideva with Seal (top)
*Scale: Three fifths*





Prince of Wales Museum Plates of Dadda III: Year 427
*Scale*: *One half*




Īpūr Plates of Govindavarman's son Mādhavavarman
*Scale: Three fourths; a = Obverse, b = Reverse.*

The Seal of the Īpūr Plates
*Full size*

The Seal of the Larger Plates of Rājēndra-Chola
*Full size*

In the charters, the illustrations of which accompany this paper, no engraver is mentioned.

*Authentication.* By authentication we mean the marks or signs that prove the validity and the genuineness of a charter. As indicated above, the most prominent of such marks is the royal seal. Apart from this, there is the sign manual of the king, as in the case of Dadda's grant (Pl. IV), which has, at the very end, *sva-hasto mama śrī-Daddasya* (followed by an ornamental flourish, marking the auspicious closing of the deed), '(*this is*) the own sign manual of me, the illustrious Dadda.' It may be observed that this signature or stamp of the king is in characters different from those of the grant itself. The Svalpa-Velura grant[23] was attested or registered (*lāñchhita*), by the chief queen (*mahādevī*) Vāsabhaṭṭārikā. This was obviously another way of authentication, in addition to the royal seal. This latter took various shapes. The earlier ones are simple and contain an emblem or two, forming the royal insignia or coat-of-arms. Later on, legends also make their appearance. On the seals of the Vākāṭaka charters we have metrical legends only, and no emblem. But, by far the most seals contain both a legend and an emblem combined. The seal of the Sāsanakoṭa charter (Pl. II) shows only the figure of an elephant, standing, facing the proper left, as already noticed. The seal of Kāntideva's charter (Pl. III) is more elaborate. This illustration shows it separated from the plate below, but in reality it is soldered to the top of the plate above the engraved part. It has a raised rim with pointed ends. 'It is divided into two panels. The upper one bears in relief the figure of a seated lion inside a temple. The temple is indicated, as in many sculptures in Bengal, by a trefoil arch with flagstaffs on both sides. The seated lion is represented with mouth open and all the four paws in front. Across the lower panel of the seal is the legend *śrī-Kāntidevaḥ*. The letters are engraved in bold relief on a raised space. The seal is supported, at its lower end, by two figures of serpents, with raised hoods, whose interlaced tails and parts of the bodies are soldered both to the raised rim of the seal and the plate'.[24] The circular seal of the Īpūr charter (Pl. VI) is much worn out. 'It is divided by a cross-line into two sections. The lower section bears, in relief, the legend *śrī-Mādhava-varmā* in two lines. Above the line seems to be a figure of Lakshmī or a Svastika on a pedestal, flanked by two lamp-stands and surmounted

[23] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 136.
[24] *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 313-14.

by the sun (?) and the crescent of the moon'.[25] The most excellent specimen of a royal seal, attached to a charter, is perhaps the one belonging to the Chola monarch Rājendra-Chola (Pl. VII). It is about 4½" in diameter and is provided with 16 knobs, at about equal intervals, around the margin, the whole of it so designed evidently to give the appearance of an expanded lotus. The central portion of the seal is flattened and marked off by a circular line. It contains the following emblems, constituting the Chola coat-of-arms. The most conspicuous of the emblems is a pair of fish—the scales, fins, gills, eyes and snouts of which are clearly delineated—facing which is a tiger, seated dog-fashion, with its tail brought forward between the legs and touching one of the two fish. Over the tiger is seen a parasol (*chhatra*) flanked by two flywhisks (*chāmaras*). In the space between the parasol and the left flywhisk is a miniature representation of the sun while the crescent is faintly visible to the left of this flywhisk. Two lamp-stands are figured, one to the left of the fish and the other to the right of the tiger, forming a straight row with them. Each stand has a cloth knotted round the middle of it, while a wick-lamp is shown burning in each. Below this row of emblems is figured a strung bow, the curved side down. Around the circle which encloses all these symbols is engraved a metrical legend in characters of the Choḷa-Grantha type which reads—

*Etad-Rājendra-Choḷasya Parakesarivarmmaṇaḥ*
*rājad-rājanya-mukuṭa-śreṇi-ratneshu-śāsanam*

'This is the order of Rājendra-Choḷa, alias Parakesarivarman, on the crest-jewels of the reigning kings (*i.e.* to be obeyed by them).'

This completes the account, in bare outline, of Sanskrit copper-plate grants. It is needless to say that in this general description many important details may have escaped notice. It may, however, succeed, within its limited scope, in showing the nature and main features of the class of documents as also what an historian may expect to find in them. The mass of Sanskrit copper charters requires to be classified dynasty-wise and the charters of each dynasty to be studied in detail, along 'diplomatic' lines, in order to deduce full historical facts from them. The present brief treatment may serve as a mere pointer in that direction.

[25] *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, p. 334. The details cannot be made out from the illustration.

# QUESTIONED DOCUMENT SPECIALISTS

GEORGE J. LACY

*Secretary, American Society of Questioned Document Examiners*

SINCE early in the history of the universe, when important matters were recorded on stone and parchment, documents have played an increasingly important part in our civilization. So important are documents in this—the so-called Atomic Age—that practically everyone is influenced daily by some sort of authoritative paper.

But what is a document? Some dictionaries define a document as being an official or authoritative paper which contains proof for information and the establishment of facts. However, we all know that many documents are being prepared and used today, which attempt to do just the opposite—they attempt to establish that which is not a fact. These documents may be deeds, contracts, wills, marriage licenses, simple vote ballots, or they may be writings involving a myriad of matters which confront us in our present complex system of living.

Because of this increasing importance of documents, succeeding generations have produced inventive men who have made improvements in the methods of making paper, ink, various writing instruments and the like. Likewise, the number of counterfeiters or forgers who make or alter documents, has seemed to increase with each generation. But the first fifty years of this twentieth century, have seen the genesis of a profession whose chief work is the discovery of forgeries and their disclosure. The practitioners of this unique profession are called questioned document examiners.

## AMERICAN SOCIETY OF QUESTIONED DOCUMENT EXAMINERS

Some years ago an organization known as the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, which even now is not too well known, was founded by Mr. Albert S. Osborn (1858-1946) of New York. Mr. Osborn, who is considered by authorities to have been the international dean of questioned document examiners, spent his lifetime in extensive research and study concerning the problems involved in the examination of documents in question. For many years he studied and delved into the intricacies of handwriting and typewriting identification and the labyrinth of related matters. To

a great extent, it was through his continued efforts, and through his stimulation of the interest and collaboration of others, that a scientific approach to this work was developed, and to use Mr. Osborn's own words "A New Profession" was born.

By the second decade of the twentieth century, document examiners had worked and studied and demonstrated so well the worth of their knowledge, that their services were being used more and more and they were becoming more eminent. Also, their expert opinions regarding the validity or spuriousness of documents in question, were being given more and more credence in the courts of law. In writing an introduction to the first edition of Mr. Albert S. Osborn's first book "Questioned Documents" in 1910, Professor John H. Wigmore, Dean of Northwestern University Law School and author of "Wigmore on Evidence" said:

> "........If Judges and lawyers can thoroughly grasp the author's faith in the value of explicit, rational data for expert opinions, the whole atmosphere of such inquiries will become more healthy. The status of the expert will be properly strengthened, and the processes of a trial will be needfully improved....."

For many years this small group of men met informally each year to discuss ways of improving the scientific discovery and proof of facts in handwriting and typewriting identification, and ink, paper and related problems concerning documents in question. As a result of these meetings, the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners was chartered in 1942.

As stated in the Society's constitution, membership is by invitation only, and is limited to persons of high and steadfast moral character with a thorough technical training in questioned document work. All prospective members of the Society are invited for a period of two years to be guests at the annual compulsory seminar or conference of the members. As a result, the regular members are afforded a chance to observe the work and standards of these guests, and at the end of this two year proving period, the prospective member may be elected to regular membership.

The annual conferences of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners are usually held in cities in which there are located one or more of those industries which directly or indirectly relate to the profession of questioned document examination. By visiting the plants and observing the details regarding such activities as paper making, the manufacture of typewriters, inks, writing instru-

ments, carbon papers and the like, these men become better qualified to scientifically answer questions regarding those things which make a document.

The motto of this Society is "Justice Through Science", and this inscription appears in their official seal. The members pledge thomselves (among other things) to maintain the ethical, educational and technical standards of this profession; to foster scientific research and the development of scientific instruments and processes; to find and assist in training worthy prospective members; and to create confidence in this important field of work through exemplary conduct.

## Ramifications of the Profession

Although the questioned document examiner is commonly known as a handwriting expert, actually the qualified questioned document examiner is much more than that. In todays practice of their profession, these specialists are required to have knowledge of many of the sciences, as well as to be proficient in the use of the many scientific instruments employed in their work. Since the average person is quicker to believe what he can see, rather than just what he hears, a thorough knowledge of document photography is extremely important to the qualified examiner. By the use of enlarged photographic exhibits in conjunction with his testimony, the qualified document examiner is able to actually make the document speak for itself. Thereby the judge or jury is able to see and follow the reasons for the opinion of the document specialist.[1]

Because of the fact that these specialists are required to give their opinions in the courts of law, these qualified examiners are well versed in the proper presentation of questioned document testimony, and the rules of evidence pertaining thereto. The close collaboration of attorneys and these document specialists and their exposure of various methods of human chicanery, has helped to save many corporations as well as individuals, literally millions of dollars.

Some of the many questions submitted to the questioned document examiner and which he is usually able to answer, are as follows: Is the signature genuine? Is the handwriting in the body

[1] Boyd v. Gosser, 78 Fla. 64, 82 So. 758 (1919): ". . . . But the error in the conclusion arrived at upon the first hearing consisted in treating the testimony of the . . . . expert on handwriting, Wm. J. Kinsley, as merely opinion evidence. It was something more than the mere opinion of the witness. It was a detailed statement of facts . . . . ; facts which were revealed by the use of mechanical instruments and scientifically established to the degree of demonstration. So the decree is reversed."

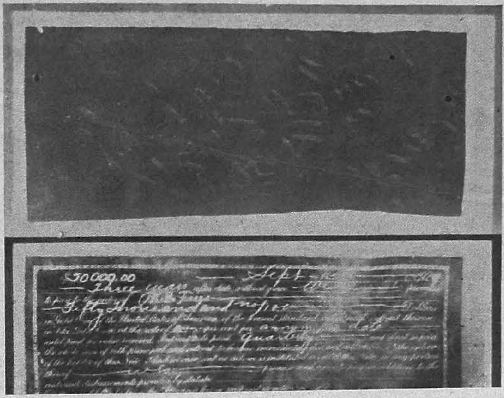
of the document genuine? Was the anonymous letter written by a certain suspected person? Are there any material erasures or alterations? Was a certain writing written before or after the paper was folded? Is there any fraudulent substitution of pages? Was the writing continuously written in the order that it appears? Was more than one kind of ink used in writing the document? Is the paper as old as the date the document bears? What was the original writing under an ink blotch? Was the typewriting written on a particular typewriter? What make of typewriter was used to write the document? Is the typewriting consistent with the date of the instrument? Was the page written continuously without being removed from the typewriter? Were any sentences, phrases, words, letters or figures added to the original writing? Were different typewriter ribbons used in writing two different documents?

## Cases

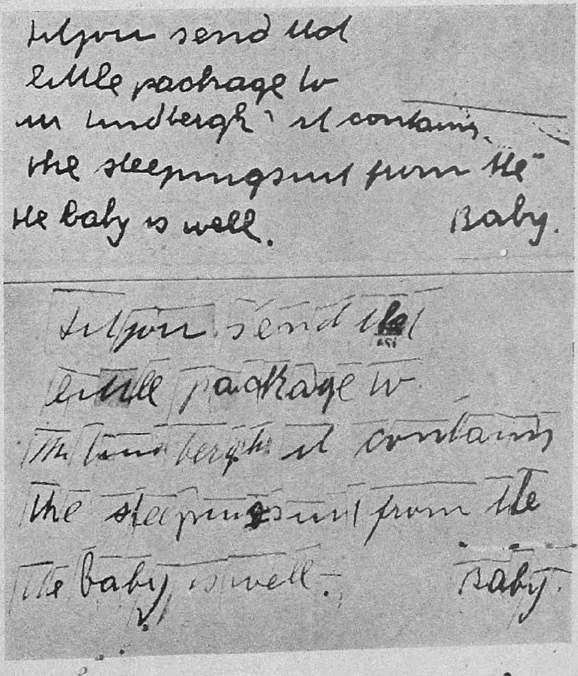
Through the knowledge and use of science, these specialists have done much to further the administration of justice in litigations of both large and small import. Probably the most well known case in the last fifty years in which questioned document examiners have taken an important part, is the Lindbergh kidnapping case. During the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann, eight of the leading document examiners of the United States,[2] testified for the state of New Jersey regarding the handwriting in the ransom notes. By demonstrative photographic exhibits used in conjunction with their testimony, these specialists were able to show beyond reasonable doubt that the writer of the ransom letters and Bruno Richard Hauptmann were the same person.

Probably one of the least known of the services which these qualified document examiners are requested to render, is the deciphering of writing in documents which have been exposed to extreme heat and have become charred to the extent that they can not be read. A few years ago a document examiner was submitted the charred remains of the contents of a bank safety deposit box ; he was asked to determine, if possible, the identity of the charred pieces of paper. After the application of various methods, and with the exercise of a great deal of care and patience, the specialist was able to decipher and photographically demonstrate that the documents

[2] Seven of these examiners became charter members of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners.



*Upper*: Charred paper.
*Lower*: Photograph made from the charred paper.



*Upper*: A section from one of the ransom notes (referring to sleeping suit).
*Lower*: A composite of the above note made from the known handwriting of Hauptmann.

which were then only thin sheets of carbon, had originally been stock certificates. He was able to show the name of the company by whom they were issued, the serial number of the certificates, the number of shares, the par value, the name of the owner and the date of issue of the certificates.

A genuine signature to a document does not necessarily mean that the document is genuine. Recently, a typewritten twenty year note for one hundred thousand dollars, was submitted to a corporation for payment. The corporation questioned the validity of this note and it was submitted to an examiner of questioned documents.

During the examination of this document in the laboratory of the specialist, he found that the signature to the note was unquestionably genuine. An examination of the typewriting revealed that the type face was of Underwood design, but that this particular design was not manufactured until five years subsequent to the date of the note in question. Further examination of the document revealed that it had originally been a genuine document of an entirely different nature. The writing had been cleverly eradicated, and the one hundred thousand dollar note had been typed over the eradication.

When the person who presented the note for payment was advised of these findings, he claimed that the note was found among the old papers of an estate, of which he was the administrator. Further investigation by the examiner revealed that the note had been typed on the administrator's personal typewriter, which was located at the private home of the administrator.

Fortunately a document is something tangible. It can be seen. It can be investigated. It can be studied under the revealing microscope. It can be measured by instruments of precision. It can be photographed by the aid of ultraviolet light or by infrared rays. An experienced mind trained to accurately observe and correctly interpret the most minute evidence can be brought to bear on the subject. If genuine, a document in question will survive these tests; if it does not, spuriousness can be exposed.

The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners is furthering the ends of justice by fostering the advancement of the New Profession dedicated to the detection of fraud and proof of genuineness in documents.

# RECORDS OF DANISH INTEREST IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

V. C. Joshi

*National Archives of India*

THE DANISH EAST INDIA COMPANY was formed in 1616 and their first settlement was established four years later at Tranquebar, on the south eastern coast of India, at a site obtained from the Raja of Tanjore at an annual rent of Rs. 3,111. Here a fort, the Dansborg, was founded by one Admiral Oven Gedde on behalf of the Danish Company. In 1624 the fort became the property of the King of Denmark to whom the Company owed some money.

Within a few years of the founding of Tranquebar, the Danes made their way further up the Bay and established a factory at Balasore in about 1636. They also developed a trade with the Moluccas which enabled the Tranquebar authorities to send home large cargoes of Indian goods. A period of misfortunes, however, began for the Danish Company when Christian IV King of Denmark entered into the Thirty Years' War. The Danish arms suffered bitter defeats in Europe and there occurred a steep decline in their eastern trade. Because of its poverty the Company was forced in 1670 to surrender its Charter and make over its settlements to the Government. However, a new Company was started the same year. Its affairs, too, were far from satisfactory and soon Tranquebar was left to itself. In 1698 the Company obtained a new Charter and about this date the Danes also established a small factory on the Hooghly in Bengal. But the operations of the Company met with little success and in 1714 the Danes abandoned their factory in Bengal because of their quarrel with the Muslim governor of Hooghly.

A third Danish Company was started in 1729 and in 1732 it obtained from King Christian VI a charter confirming its privileges for forty years, a term afterwards extended to 1792. In 1755 the Danes secured from Ali Vardi Khan, through the intercession of the French authorities in Bengal, the grant of land for a settlement at Serampore on the right bank of the Hooghly river (opposite Barrackpore). Soetman was appointed as the first Danish Governor of the new settlement and he hoisted the Danish flag there on 8 October 1755. The place was named as Fredericksnagore after the King of Denmark, Frederick V.

On the outbreak of the American War of Independence when the French and Dutch also sided with the American colonies, the Danish Company entered upon a boom period. The Danes flourished on account of the quarrels of the leading maritime powers of Western Europe. In 1782 the share of the Danish Company worth 500 Rix-dollars sold at 1900 Rix-dollars and paid a dividend of 100 per cent. A number of Danish officials in India, including Governor Ole Bie of Fredericksnagore, made huge fortunes by joining private British ventures under the Danish flag. On the Coromandel Coast the war with Tipu Sultan brought to the Danes a period of greater commercial activity than that of the American war. The Danish factory at Tranquebar indulged a good deal in contraband trade in military supplies.

The prosperity of the Danish Company, however, proved to be a shortlived one and by the end of the 18th century its commerce was once again on the decline. The return of peaceful conditions in Europe and the stringent regulations adopted by the Bengal authorities for controlling the trade of the foreigners were greatly responsible for this change in the fortunes of the Danish Company.

With the outbreak of hostilities between England and Denmark, in 1801, Serampore and Tranquebar were seized by the British authorities in India but were restored next year on the conclusion of the Peace of Amiens. The Danish trade after this continued to flourish as the Calcutta merchants were keen to send their goods in Danish neutral vessels and the factors of the English Company also remitted their savings to England through the Danish Company. In 1808, however, on the renewal of hostilities between England and Denmark, the Danish territories were again seized by the English and retained until the general peace in 1815 restored them to their former owners.

Though the Danes got back their territories they were not able to recover their trade because of the English competition and the effective measures taken by the English authorities to stop smuggling which was the mainstay of Danish commercial activity in India. The financial position of the Danish Company was far from satisfactory. In 1826 the Danish authorities in Bengal offered to sell their factory at Patna, but the offer was not accepted by the English. The Danes finally decided to liquidate their territorial possessions in India and the negotiations which preceded their transfer to the English Company are recorded in detail in the correspondence of the Government at Fort William. By the treaty concluded on 22 February 1845 (the original of the treaty is in the National Archives of India), all the

Danish possessions in India, viz. Tranquebar, Serampore and a piece of land at Balasore, were sold to the English East India Company for Rs. 12,50,000. The formal transfer was made on 11 October after the ratification of the treaty.

The records relating to the Danish activity in India in the custody of the National Archives consist mainly of the correspondence that passed between the Danish authorities at Serampore (Fredericksnagore) and the Fort William Government. There are also among them some communications which were exchanged by the British authorities in Bengal with the Danish Government of Tranquebar and the Presidency of Fort St. George. The largest number of these records are to be found among the Proceedings and Original Consultations of the Foreign Department as it was that Department which conducted the transactions in respect of foreign European nations. The Department came into existence in December 1783 and merged into the Political Department in August 1842. Its records relating to the Danes cover the period from February 1784 to March 1840. Next in bulk as well as in importance are records of the Public Department for 1769 to 1808. These contain mostly correspondence of commercial nature and form valuable materials for the study of the disputes between the British and the Danish authorities regarding payment of customs duties in Bengal. The papers of Danish interest among the records of the Political Department relate to 1844-49 and include the correspondence regarding the sale of the Danish possessions to the English Company. There are also a few documents on this subject among the Secret Proceedings of the Fort William Government. The Persian Correspondence Series also contain some letters bearing on the activities of the Danes. A study of these records yields valuable information regarding the political and commercial relations of the two Companies in Bengal.

The Danes had no pretensions to an empire on a grand scale; theirs was a purely commercial venture. However, inspite of the absence of political conflict their relations with the English in Bengal were far from friendly, commercial rivalry being a major source of friction. The Danes depended largely on smuggling and illicit trade which the English Company tried to check to safeguard its own commercial interests. The close proximity of Serampore to Calcutta created many other difficulties. Conflicts, for instance, often arose over criminals, deserters and others from one territory finding asylum in the other. The Baptist Missionaries who carried on from Seram-

pore, under Danish protection, a vigorous religious propaganda in the British territories, proved to be another source of embarrassment.

The records contain many references to the disputes between the English and the Danish Company over the rights regarding Danish trade in Bengal. The promulgation by the authorities at Fort William, in 1781, of new regulations regarding the trade of the foreigners was very much resented by the Danes. They claimed to have obtained certain rights and privileges from the 'Sovereign of the country' against the payment of a large sum of money and objected to violation of those rights by the English.[1]

Governor Bie of Fredericksnagore in a letter, dated 22 April 1784, addressed to the Governor General and Supreme Council at Fort William, protested against what he called 'unjustifiable regulations' adopted by the English Commissioner of Customs. He wrote, "The Regulations instituted Your Commissioners under the incongruous Title of Inland Import Duties, and whereby they so inconsiderately have pretended, that the Danish Nation should pay twice 2½ P. Cent., to say, once in bringing the Goods from the several Aurungs into this Place, and once more in carrying them on Board our Ships, was never the Intention of the Sovereign of this Country, when He granted our Privileges of Trade, subjecting us only to pay once 2½ P. Cent. on what we exported from Bengal, and 2½ P. Cent. on what we imported into the Kingdom of Bengal, and which we have enjoyed upwards of thirty Years unmolested".[2] The Danish authorities also objected against the English practice of searching Danish ships and regarded it as humiliating. Several communications addressed by the authorities at Fredericksnagore protesting against the frequent stoppage of Danish vessels at Calcutta for examination of their cargoes are to be found among the Foreign Department Consultations.

The English, on the other hand, suspected the Danes of much clandestine trade and detained their ships like the *Cronburg* and the *Christianburg* which were engaged in illicit commercial activity. They held that their right of visiting and searching all foreign vessels was indisputable and had been invariably exercised by the officers of the *Bux bunder* (custom house) from time immemorial. Furthermore the Fort William authorities were of the view that the privileges conferred on the Danes by the *firman* mentioned by them did not extend to individuals, but were expressly confined to the Danish

[1] For. Cons. 18 February 1784, no 16.
[2] For. Cons. 13 May 1784, no 5.

Company's commerce in the factory and 'port' of Serampore. The Danish Company's trade on its own account, however, was very limited. The English denied having levied a duty of 2½ per cent. under the title of an Inland Import Duty. Respecting the charge of collecting 'double duty' upon goods belonging to the Danes, the Commissioners of Customs in their letter of 3 May 1784 to the Acting Governor General and Council wrote, "double Duty is the established penalty for Approaching a Custom House station without a Rowannah. Vessels carrying Goods from Serampore to Calcutta and provided with Rowannahs are never impeded by Custom House Officers—but if such Goods are laden on Danish or any other Foreign Bottoms in this Port, they will of course be liable to Government Export Duty".[3]

The Danes repeatedly asked for a treatment similar to that accorded to the French and the Dutch. The Danish authorities deputed Christian William Duntzfelt to Calcutta in July 1786 to discuss the whole question of the payment of customs duties and other grievances in respect of the Danish trade in Bengal.[4] He proposed a set of draft regulations.[5] These, however, were not acceptable to the English and Duntzfelt was recalled to Serampore in 1787. The disputes therefore continued.

Among other grievances of the Danes some related to supply of opium of which the English had undertaken to supply to the Danish Company 800 chests every year at prime cost, trade in saltpetre and import and sale of salt in the Danish territories. In 1824 a Convention was concluded between the two Governments by which the Danes agreed to discontinue manufacture of and trade in salt for the payment to them of Rs. 15,000 per annum as compensation. The trade in salt manufactured in the British India was to be free in the Danish territories.[6]

During the years following the peace of 1815 and the restoration of the Danish territories in India the Danes were in a poor state. Their trade was adversely affected by the late wars and the resources of Denmark had been greatly reduced by the alienation of Norway which was the principal country from where Denmark drew her most profitable articles of exports. The correspondence between Fort William and Serampore for this period clearly reflects the declining state of the Danish dominion in Bengal.

[3] For. Cons. 13 May 1784, no 6.
[4] For. Cons. 24 July 1786, no 17.
[5] For. Cons. 13 October 1786, no 27.
[6] For. Cons. 24 June 1824, nos 7-8; 1 July 1824, no 2.

The taking over of Serampore by the Fort William authorities in 1801 raised important and interesting issues. At the outset, Governor Bie proposed certain articles of surrender the acceptance of which would have left the general administration of Serampore in the hands of the Danish officials serving there, but these were rejected by the English. Disposal of Danish property seized at Serampore was another complex problem because it was somewhat difficult to make a distinction between the property belonging to Danish individuals and that of the Danish Company. Still another problem was the payment of subsistence allowances to the captured Danish officers. Finally, there was the question of administration and legal arrangements, particularly regarding the laws applicable in the occupied territory. After much discussion it was decided to make no change and the law suits continued to be decided according to the Danish laws in vogue at the settlement and by the Danish Judge.[7]

These very problems presented themselves again seven years later on the occupation of the Danish possessions for the second time. The records available in the National Archives contain valuable materials not merely for the study of the administration of Serampore during the periods of British occupation but also for the civil and judicial government before the outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and Denmark. Such materials are available in the reports sent to the Government by the British Commissioners appointed during the periods of occupation. We learn that the Governor of Serampore was appointed by His Danish Majesty and was usually assisted by a Council of two members, a Secretary and some writers. The revenue was derived mainly from ground rent farmed by public auction from the first of February for each year. In addition to this the King's Godowns were leased to the Company for Rs. 1,200 per annum. There were two courts—one for Indian residents called the 'Cutchery' and the other for Europeans. The former was presided over by a Judge, commonly known as Jemadar because he had the charge of police as well. He had civil and criminal jurisdiction over the Indian inhabitants of the settlement, and was usually a member of the Council. He was expected to be well informed about Indian laws and customs. He was assisted by an interpreter styled as the Head Sircar in the performance of his judicial duties. The proceedings of the court were recorded in Bengali language by a writer. An appeal from the Jemadar's court lay with the Governor of Serampore

[7] For Cons. 3 June 1801, no 25.

whose decision was final regarding amounts upto 100 Rix-dollars or 150 Sicca Rupees. In suits involving larger amounts, a further appeal lay with the Superior Court at Tranquebar (consisting of the Governor General, the Superior Judge and members of the Council) and from there to the King in Council in Copenhagen.

The European court was established in Serampore in about 1756 and consisted of "a Judge, a recorder, a Register and two European witnesses, to attest its proceedings and to verify them when required on oath".[8] This court was not under the control or authority of the Governor of Serampore. The Judge was bound to have a thorough knowledge of the Danish law and exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction over the European inhabitants of the settlement. The Danish Code of Laws of 1683 and the Code for the colonies of 8 January 1781 were applicable in all causes coming to him for decision. His judgement was final to the amount of 150 Sicca Rupees. In disputes involving larger amounts an appeal lay with the Court of Judicature at Tranquebar and from there with the King in Council. Criminal cases were also decided by the same Judge of the European Court. He could even pronounce death sentence but it could only be executed on confirmation by the Supreme Tribunal in Copenhagen and with the approval of His Danish Majesty. The Chief of the Settlement appointed attornies at law to the European Courts. A police force was attached to the two courts of the settlement and there were separate prisons for the European and Indian inhabitants.

Serampore had become the scene of the labours of the Baptist Missionaries in the early years of the 19th century. This small Danish settlement, situated only 14 miles from Fort William, offered them hospitality and protection which they could not enjoy in British territory as they had not obtained licences from the Court of Directors. In 1800 William Carey joined the Baptist Mission at Serampore and under his leadership the Society of Missionaries made great progress. Among the records in the National Archives of India there are several interesting references regarding the activities of William Carey and his colleagues which also extended to Calcutta and the neighbouring British territories. The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 created fears and apprehensions of disaffection among Indians of all communities whom the missionaries wanted to convert to Christianity and the Government of Sir George Barlow placed many restrictions on

[8] For. Cons. 22 February 1808, no 13.

the public preaching of the Gospel. We come across among the records documents which reflect Lord Minto's policy towards the Baptist Missionaries and the reasons for taking some stringent measures to place a check on their objectionable activities. The publication in 1807 of a tract from Serampore in which Mohammad had been called an impostor could not be overlooked by the British Government. Since the works printed at Serampore were meant for consumption in the British Dominion the Governor General in Council ordered that the press be transferred to Calcutta so that it could be placed under the control of the Government in the same manner as the other presses established at Calcutta.[9] This order was cancelled on the intercession of the Governor of Serampore, but Lord Minto kept a tight control over the publications of the missionary press by requiring the missionaries to submit to the inspection of the officers of the British Government works of religious character previously to their publication.[10]

Serampore was a small settlement and ranked after Tranquebar which the Danes regarded as their headquarters in the East. Naturally the records of the Serampore Council and its correspondence with the Government of Fort William are secondary in importance to those of the Danish Government of Tranquebar.[11] Inspite of this limitation, the records in the National Archives of India are invaluable for a student of the Anglo-Danish relations in India, particularly during the years 1784-1845.[12]

[9] Secret Cons. 15 September 1807, no 3.

[10] Secret Cons. 5 October 1807, no 9.

[11] The records of Tranquebar are at present available in Madras Record Office. They comprise of 9 bundles and over 200 volumes and cover the period from 1777 to 1845. On transfer of Tranquebar to the English Company, the records were deposited with the Collector of Tanjore and they remained there until 1891 when the Government placed them in the custody of the Madras Record Office. A typed list of these records is available in the Madras Record Office. An alphabetical list of marriages registered in the Danish Church Registers of Zion Church of Tranquebar (1765-1845) compiled by Rev. K. Heiberg has been printed.

There are 77 volumes of surviving Danish Records of Serampore in the West Bengal Record Office, now temporarily located in Berhampore. They mostly comprise notarial papers, deeds of transfer or mortgage, protocols, registers of marriages and other judicial documents; but detailed study of their contents has not been made so far.

[12] A descriptive list of these records will be published in subsequent issues of *The Indian Archives.*

# THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

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MOST visitors to England, and many even of those who have never visited her shores, know the outlines of the British Houses of Parliament. At one end is a tall slim tower, surmounted by the Clock and the world famous hour bell, 'Big Ben'. Then southwards lie a long line of offices and Libraries with the two actual Chambers in the centre. At the further end is a tower, taller and far larger in girth than the Clock Tower: the Victoria Tower. This Festival year, many visitors have stood and gazed at its 323 feet of Gothic decoration (and temporary scaffolding) but few know what this tower is. It is, in fact, the Record Office of the House of Lords—the repository for the archives of Parliament—and, also, the place of storage for a year after each General Election of the Ballot papers.[1] It was built a hundred years ago as the crowning architectural feature of Sir Charles Barry's new Houses of Parliament,[2] and now that air-conditioning is overcoming the dampness engendered by river-mists, it is proving an admirable repository. Entirely constructed within as without, of stone and iron, its fire-risks are low ; physically remote from most of Parliament's offices and somewhat inaccessible, there is no great competition for the use of its rooms, and the records therefore have space in which to grow and expand. At the moment they occupy ten floors, with eight rooms on each floor ; but there are several more floors that can be brought into use, as yearly accessions from the overworked Houses bring in ever-increasing quantities of archives.

At the foot of the Victoria Tower a group of offices attempt to provide on a small scale the facilities offered elsewhere by the Public Record Office. There is a Search Room open all the year round to students, a Repair shop, a Microfilm room, a Readers' room with a microfilm reader, and an administrative office. There has also been opened recently a small permanent display of Parliamentary archives ; and for long, the most famous Manuscripts from the collection have been shown in the House of Lords' Library on the other side of the building, above the River Terrace.

[1] The Ballot papers are in the charge of the Crown Office in Chancery.

[2] At first it was intended to use the interior of the Victoria Tower as a gigantic ventilation shaft: only when this had proved unsatisfactory, was a record repository constructed within it, cf. *Parliament Past and Present*, Wright and Smith, pp. 235, 270.

Although much of this organisation is recent, the essential factor, the preservation and production of records, has been going on in the Houses of Parliament (or, to use the more accurate title, the Palace of Westminster), ever since 1497. And the responsible officer, the Clerk of the Parliaments, was originally appointed to do the work of scribe and archivist in the early fourteenth century.[3] For nearly two hundred years, as he was also a Chancery clerk, he transmitted the records he made to the Chancery repository, whence they have now been moved to the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane.[4] But ever since Richard Hatton, Clerk of the Parliaments, preserved in 1497, in his own office at Westminster, the original parchment on which the 'Act for Taking of Apprentices to make Worsteds in the County of Norfolk' was inscribed, the collection has grown steadily, until it now numbers upwards of half-a-million pieces, and forms one of the principal original sources for British history in the country.

It may be worth noting, in passing, that this business of record making and keeping, within Parliament, is the specific function of the Upper House. All acts done by Parliament as a whole are performed in the Lords' Chamber (which alone is technically the 'Parliament Chamber'), and the records of those acts are naturally in the Lords' keeping. The keeping has on the whole been remarkably safe and diligent, whether we consider the 16th and 17th centuries when the peers made rules for the engrossing on parchment of their principal records and for the inspection of the Journals; the 18th century, when Committees sitting for 12 years thoroughly overhauled the whole system, and when, in 1767, the peers began the large-scale printing of public records with their magnificent editions of the *Rolls of Parliament* and the *Lords' Journals*; or more recent days when a full calendar of the papers has been undertaken, and the modern facilities of a Record Office provided.[5]

Of course, as the Commons acquired status and organisation of their own, they began to produce record series of matters particular

[3] Cf. *English Historical Review*, October 1931, April and July 1932, and April 1942; also *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, February 1938. In 1946 for the first time, the Clerk of the Parliaments appointed an archivist, the Clerk of the Records, as his permanent deputy to care for the MSS.

[4] The mediaeval Parliamentary records may be found amongst the *Parliament Rolls, Statute Rolls, Ancient Petitions, Chancery, Parliament and Council Proceedings*, and *Exchequer, Parliament and Council Proceedings*. (Cf. *Guide to the Public Records*, ed. Guiseppi). The great bulk of this material is pre-1500; after then it contains very little of any general interest.

[5] For the 16th and 17th centuries, cf. Lords *Journals*, II, p. 195 and III, p. 74; for the 18th century, cf. *ibid.*, XX, p. 420-XXIII, p. 303 *passim*, and *ibid.*, XXXI, p. 509, XXXIII, p. 214; for the 19th century, *1st Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Appendix, pp. 1-4; though this last reference reveals a good deal of carelessness in the period 1834-1869 so far as Papers laid on the Table were concerned.

to themselves. They kept, for example, their own first drafts of bills, although the final engrossment of the bill as it left them passed to the Lords. Unfortunately this collection is now lost. In a disastrous fire of 1834[6] the Commons' bills, petitions, committee and minute books perished utterly, and today only the Commons' Journals survive to tell of the long centuries of legislative and deliberative work there. Since 1834 the Commons record series have started afresh, and most of them are now kept in the Victoria Tower alongside the Lords' MSS.[7]

This is mainly of domestic concern and not of general interest; but some of the individual documents within the Lords' collection have a meaning not only for England but for all countries which share her tradition. Indeed one can pick out a series of parchments which will sum up the whole constitutional development of Britain and the Commonwealth; from the Petition of Right of 1628 to the Death Warrant of Charles I of 1649, the Declaration of Breda of 1660, the Habeas Corpus Act of 1679, the Bill of Rights of 1689, the Articles of Union of England and Scotland of 1707, the Reform Act of 1832, and now such acts as the Union of South Africa Act of 1910 and the India Independence Act of 1947. All these documents are preserved, it so happens, in almost 'mint' condition as if they had been written or printed yesterday, apart from the Death Warrant, a much exhibited and handled document down the ages, which is now in a perhaps appropriately dingy condition.

It is impossible in a brief article to catalogue all the documents of historic fame in the collection, though one is tempted to comment on some of the oddities, such as, for instance, the couple of grave-stones of the 18th century, laid on the Table of the House a century ago in a Peerage claim, and said to have been especially forged for the occasion. But it might be of use if a few suggestions were thrown out on ways in which the Lords' MSS could be of value to the student of Indian history.

The approach to the collection can be made through several printed series of books, which are moderately accessible, at least for those within reach of the larger public libraries. First, the *Journals* of the Lords, a formidable line of volumes, the earlier in great folios, now coming up to the 183d volume. These cover the whole period

[6] The fire of 1834 was caused by the burning of the wooden Exchequer tally-sticks in the boilers of the House of Lords. The sticks were destroyed, but so was the Palace of Westminster. Cf. *Parliament Past and Present*, chap. XIII, and the contemporary *Times* files, for dramatic eyewitness descriptions.

[7] The Commons' papers are under the control of the Commons' offices, but for purposes of production and use, they are handled by the Lords' Record Office.

from 1509 to date, with the exception of the years 1649-60, and there are valuable collected indexes. Most business of the House from about 1624 onwards, recorded in the *Journals,* left its trace in papers in the Lords' MSS, and so the *Journals* act as a series of 'Lists and Indexes' for the collection. Then there is another fine set of folios, the *Statutes of the Realm,* which print all public acts in full to 1714; and the various editions of *Sessional Volumes* of acts, *Statutes at Large* etc., which print public acts, and also most private acts after 1815. Thirdly, the entire collection of MSS has been calendared up to the year 1712, the earlier period appearing in Appendices to the *Reports of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts* (published 1874-96), and the MSS dating 1693-1712 appearing as separate volumes published by the House of Lords itself. At the moment a Calendar for the years 1712-1714 is in the press; and it will be followed by a Supplementary Calendar for the years 1500-1714.[8] The early volumes of the Calendar dealt with most MSS rather briefly, but the papers after 1660 have been printed with increasing detail, and it is now the practice to print *in extenso* all MSS of national importance, whilst calendaring briefly the more parochial and personal matters.

The group of papers which touch on Indian affairs most frequently in the earlier period, is that of *Petitions to the House.* A petition to either House of Parliament has always been, and still is, a natural and effective way of drawing attention to a grievance, and in the early days of the East India Company, those who could not get satisfaction out of the Company often turned to the Lords. Two extracts from the Calendar will illustrate this class of documents, and also show the format of the earlier calendars:

> 1626, April 30. Petition of Thomas Hackwell and others, twelve very poor men employed by the merchants and company trading to the East Indies: were surprised by the Dutch, imprisoned in loathsome vaults, and exposed to such horrors that many of the prisoners died; and the petitioners at length freed had lost to the value of £3630.10s. In 1620 their case was heard by the Committee of the House, and the East India Company then promised them satisfaction whenever the Dutch should make restitution. The Privy Council also ordered them satisfaction and directed the Trinity House to examine the matter, but the East India Company having got the matter referred

[8] The Calendars are obtainable from H. M. Stationery Office, Kingsway, London, or any bookseller, at prices ranging from 1/11 to 12/6.

instead to the Admiralty Court, the petitioners could get nothing but their wages.

Lists of the mariners' specific grievances are annexed, together with other papers, but very strangely, there is no note of the matter in the *Journals*, and we do not know whether the 'very poor men' were recompensed.

1640/1, Feb. 9. Petition of Margaret Frith, relict of James Frith, deceased, and of Richard Weston, guardian to Humphrey and Ann Alcock, orphan children of Richard Alcock. Frith, a surgeon in the East India Company's service, was killed by the Moors at the factory at Iambe. Alcock, also a surgeon in the Company's service died at the River Armagan: petitioners pray for payment of certain sums, which they allege to be due from the company to the estates of Frith and Alcock respectively.

Accounts of the two surgeons with the Company are annexed; and the House referred the petition to the Governor of the Company '*for satisfaction*'. Satisfaction was not, however, granted in a later example, taken at random from the 19th century papers: a petition from Mirza Ali Kadir, one of the ex-royal family of Delhi, then at Shoaygqueen, Burma, complaining in 1872 of wrongful imprisonment and exile, consequent on the Indian mutiny. This Petition their Lordships read and debated, they then resolved 'That the said Petition do lie on the Table', in other words, that nothing be done about it.

Petitions to the House also form the first stage in *Judicial Cases*, and a considerable proportion of the MSS are concerned with the judicial functions of the 'High Court of Parliament', as the English Prayer Book has it. Some of the cases refer to India (this was before the days of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council) as for example, The East India Company v. Higgenius (1642), or the extremely important case of Skinner v. East India Company (1667). The latter case originated in the seizure by the Company in 1659 of Skinner's goods, warehouse and ship, and also of the Barella Islands which he had bought from the King of Jamby in order to carry out a contract for the supply of pepper. The Company challenged the Lords' jurisdiction, and eventually King Charles II ordered the record of proceedings to be expunged from the *Journals*. The Lords in this leading case thus failed to establish their power of acting as a civil court of first instance; though within a few years they did establish their right to hear appeals from Chancery, and from then onwards, appeal cases abound.

In one particular type of case the Lords, however, could act as a

court of first instance: when the Commons solemnly impeached an individual before them. From the impeachment of Mompesson, the notorious monopolist, in 1621, on through the 17th and 18th centuries, this proved a convenient method of exercising control over the King, his Ministers, and 'over-mighty subjects' generally. The most famous impeachment of all was that of Warren Hastings for "arbitrary and illegal Acts of Oppression, Injustice, Extortion, Severity, and Cruelty, and for permitting such Acts to be exercised towards several of the Native Princes in India, and their Wives and Families." This trial, held in Westminster Hall, was begun in May 1787 and not concluded until April 1795. It produced a mass of records amongst the Lords' collection: petitions, answers, replications, letters and other evidence, MS minutes etc. On permanent display in the Record Office is the holograph petition of Hastings to the House of 18 April 1793, protesting at "the enormity of the delays which have attended the long protracted trial", and praying that it might be brought to an end in that session, else he is "doomed to linger out his life in the same unmerited state of suspense, depression, and (but for the breath of public opinion and the hopes of life sustaining him) of universal and perpetual ignominy."

Another group of importance is that of *Reports made to the House,* sometimes on a specific subject by specific order, sometimes a routine annual report under act or resolution, or by His Majesty's Command. A long and valuable series of Customs Returns came, year by year, throughout the 18th century, of 'Prohibited Goods' brought into the various ports of England from India, with the detailed and intriguing names of the articles, from Allabanes, Attlases, Chocolaes, Chelloes, and Cherconneess down the alphabet to Taffaties, Teepoyse, Wastcoats and Zeerebasts. Any major war or disturbance led to some sort of enquiry: in 1791, for example, the war with Tippoo Sultan brought an avalanche of letters, papers, and treaties. Some of these were ordered by the House to be printed; and in the 19th century a considerable proportion of Indian papers were so ordered, and thus made accessible amongst the annual bound Printed Parliamentary Papers. In the ten years 1854-1863 some 400 Accounts and Papers were laid on the Table, which, between them, touched on most aspects of Indian life from Indigo and Salt production to an allowance for the deposed Rajah of Coorg and papers on the Mutiny, besides annual papers, such as the reports on the 'Moral and Material Progress and condition of India' and the annual Statistical Abstracts.

But, naturally, the most important records of all in a Parliamentary Record Office are the Acts of Parliament; the final acts which provide the authoritative record of the law of the country, and the check upon possible mistakes in the published copies of acts. Until 1850 these final acts were engrossed on rolls of parchment, perhaps 2 or 3 feet long, but sometimes 100 feet long, or even, 100 yards; vast, unmanageable rolls, which were eventually replaced in 1850 by special books printed on vellum, and signed by the Clerk of the Parliaments or his deputy. These final acts have an extra significance in the case of most private bills (some concerning Indian affairs or the Company) of a date earlier than 1800, as in those cases, the engrossment in the Victoria Tower, is the sole existing copy.

Subsidiary to the final acts are the records of the various stages in the legislative process which produced them: the first Draft, the Engrossed Bill, the Amendment Sheets, Petitions, Evidence taken from witnesses, Minutes of Proceedings. But the actual debates on bills have never formed part of normal Parliamentary record. Indeed many unfortunate printers and publishers in the 17th and 18th century were imprisoned by order of the Houses for daring to print verbatim speeches. Summaries of debates were, of course, made in spite of this; and the best are now collected in Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, continued later as *Hansard*. Naturally the volumes dealing with 17th and 18th century debates are inadequate; a very small proportion of speeches made are noted, and then hardly ever in full; there are many inaccuracies—it is never safe to trust the figures of voting in the Lords without referring to the original MS Minutes of the House. Moreover, the reporters and publishers had their political bias, varying from time to time. During the Tory Ministry of Queen Anne (1710-1714) the *Parliamentary History* (Vol. VI) perversely gives the speeches of leading Whig peers at length whilst the Tory peers' arguments are dismissed cursorily with a line or two. Nowadays things are different: the Hansard reporters have privileged positions in each House, and they report every word spoken in debate; but, still, the results of their labours are not counted part of the official archives of Parliament.[9]

There is still, however, plenty of material of interest in connection with the actual text of bills in the Lords' MSS, from North's Regulating Act of 1773 and Pitt's India Act of 1784 to the Govern-

[9] This must have had the effect, in earlier days, of making Members feel free to speak their minds fully; and it has also concentrated attention on the actual text of statutes rather than on what members of either House intended them to mean—a judicially valuable result.

ment of India Act of 1919 and the recent Independence Act. In the period 1820-1833 there were 30 bills at least dealing with Indian affairs—and in one year, 1830-1, a total of 208 petitions seeking an act to abolish the Company's monopoly. A group of bills in the following decade represent a new series—Local bills dealing with railway, canal and dock construction ; the East India Docks Act (1835), East Indian Railway Incorporation Bill (1847-8) and East Indian Railway Company Act (1852). Where such bills were opposed minutes of the evidence taken survive, sometimes showing interesting, or even amusing, detail, as for example in the first book of Evidence I ever looked at. This was the evidence on a railway line from Windsor to Staines ; and the Lord Chairman was enquiring from witnesses, at the page at which I chanced to open the volume, as to exactly where the people of Staines bought their cigars, and where they would in future buy them, if the railway were constructed!

The student of Indian history can certainly make considerable progress in using British Parliamentary records without ever visiting Westminster or England, thanks to the *Calendars, Statutes,* printed *Parliamentary Papers* and *Journals.* There still remains, however, unprinted material of real importance for the specialist. Needless to say, the Lords' Record Office warmly welcomes any who are able to visit Westminster and study originals for themselves. But, for every one able to cross half the world to pursue more fully his research, there are a hundred who perforce remain at home. The staff of the Record Office are ready and anxious to give what help they can to these students by correspondence ;[10] and in the near future, it should be possible to supply microfilm copies from the office of specific MSS. (Students now may commission London photographers to come to the House and make photographs, photostats or microfilms of documents.) And, it would be of great value if it were possible for an Indian historian to draw up a handlist of Indian materials in the various London collections, including our own, similar to the two already prepared for American history.[11] Only after such preliminary surveys have been made can the great riches of the large record repositories of this land become fully accessible to the historian.

[10] The Record Office issues duplicated Annual Reports, Catalogues of Displays, Lists of Publications etc. to students applying for them.

[11] *Guide to the MS Materials for the History of the United States to 1783, in the British Museum, in Minor London Archives, and in the Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge,* C. M. Andrews and F. G. Davenport, (Washington, 1908), and *Guide to the Materials in London Archives for the History of the United States since 1783,* C. O. Paullin and F. L. Paxson, (Washington, 1914).

# MATERIALS RELATING TO INDIA IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, WASHINGTON[1]

PURNENDU BASU

*National Archives of India, New Delhi*

UNITED STATES interest in India dates back to the latter part of the eighteenth century when the appointment of Benjamin Joy, the first United States consul at Calcutta, was confirmed by the Senate on November 21, 1792. By that time British paramountcy in India and Indian waters was well established, and no independent diplomatic relations could develop between the two countries; and none did until 1941 when Thomas M. Wilson came to New Delhi as Commissioner of the United States to India with the rank of minister. The date of the first consular despatch from Calcutta is November 24, 1794. In the years that followed there was a good deal of trading between India and the United States; besides, a fair number of United States citizens either visited India from time to time or resided there as consular officials, businessmen, employees of the Indian Government or of Indian business firms, missionaries, teachers, and so on. Similarly, Indians were numbered among the visitors to the United States as students, businessmen, lecturers, or travellers, while many settled there until the Immigration Act of 1924 put an end to Indians' coming in any numbers to the United States. Thus intercourse between the United States and India has been of long standing and regular, and that fact is reflected in at least 39 record groups in the National Archives. India, it will be remembered, included Burma until 1937.

Naturally in the circumstances mentioned above, most of the records of Indian interest in the National Archives relate to economic and commercial affairs. The richest among these records are the reports of the United States consuls in India. The consuls did not confine themselves to economic and commercial affairs alone; most of them did a great deal of political and other reporting as well. In fact, there is hardly any subject that comes to mind which was not treated in the consular correspondence. In the general records of the Department of State (RG 59)[2] will be found consular despatches

[1] Published in 1949 as No. 38 of the National Archives Information Circulars. *Reprinted by kind permission.*

[2] The symbol "RG" and a number in parentheses refer to the record group to which the records under discussion belong. Some of these records are confidential in character and require special authorization to use them.

from Calcutta (1794-96 and 1843-1929), Bombay (1838-1929), Karachi, Madras, and Rangoon (1908-29), and Colombo (1907-29); also included are returns and reports from consular agents at Aden (until recently under the administrative control of the Government of India), Akyab, Moulmein, Bassein, Cocanada, Chittagong, and a few other places.

Some of the typical topics covered in the consular reports are as follows: Trade conditions and tariff regulations; Burma trade and commerce; detailed studies of means of communication in India; the introduction of American cotton into India; trade in the Persian Gulf; agricultural conditions in India and Ceylon; competition between American and Russian kerosene in India; natural resources and their development; regulations governing residence, trade, and travel in India; mines and mining; financial affairs; fisheries; and India's trade with different countries. Besides regular reports on these and similar topics, including statistical returns, the consuls reported on such matters as the Second Punjab War (1848), the Burma War (1852-53), a plan for steam navigation across the Pacific (1852), a proposal by "the Parsees and Hindus of Bombay to contribute half the cost of a hospital or orphanage for sufferers" of the American Civil War (1864), the "advance of Russian army into India" (1854), Hindu missionaries in the United States, Hindu hatred of British rule, the power of the East India Company, and the American School of Indo-Iranian Research in India. In the later years regular reporting on a greater variety of subjects became the rule. There were, for example, reports on specific industries, agriculture, labour conditions, commerce, floods, earthquakes, famines, general economic conditions, suffrage, citizenship, civil service, legislation, justice, municipal government, police organization, hygiene and sanitation, social organizations, public works, communications, religion, education, and the monetary system. All these reports are contained in three main series of this record group, consular despatches, 1789-1906, the "numerical" files, 1906-10, and the "decimal" files, 1910-29, of the Department of State. Within the latter series, a subseries entitled "Commerce; Trade-Agreements," contains records relating specifically to the matters indicated; another subseries contains records relating to "Americans in India"; while a third relates to "protection of German, Austrian, and Turkish individuals and interest in India" during the early years of World War I.

Also in Record Group 59 are the consular trade and political reports, 1925-45, which continue in the same strain. The political

reports, which were filed separately until 1935, are particularly voluminous. Consular inspection reports, 1906-39, especially the very detailed reports by consuls in answer to questionnaires submitted by the inspectors, contain some interesting material, including photographs and maps. In these records are data relating to American trade penetration in the Indian market. Very fruitful sources of information about political conditions in India are the reports and other materials sent to the Department of State by the United States Embassy in London.

The materials referred to so far in this record group were created largely as a result of direct United States-India relations. There are, however, sizable Indian populations in other countries occupying positions of varying significance in the economic life of those countries. These are in the main British Columbia, British Guiana, Jamaica, Trinidad, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Laccadives and Maldives, Aden, Behrein, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, Fiji, British South and East Africa, Zanzibar, the Seychelles, Mauritius, French Indo-China, and the Dutch East Indies. Consular reports from these places contain information about Indians there, for example, about Mahatma Gandhi's first "sātyagraha" (passive resistance) movement in South Africa.

Information similar to that in the general records of the Department of State (RG 59) is also to be found in the records of Foreign Service Posts (RG 84) for the following consular posts: Calcutta (1855-1912); Bombay (1855-1922); Karachi (1887-1912); Rangoon (1891-1912); Madras (1867-1912); Colombo (1870-1919); Chittagong (1866-1920); Akyab (1866-90); and Bassein (1880-85). These records duplicate to a certain extent the information contained in the consular despatches discussed above, but the post records contain much additional information of interest to students of Indian affairs. Of special interest are the following series for the various posts: Copies of despatches to the State Department; original instructions received from the State Department; miscellaneous correspondence—"general," "general and trade," and "trade;" copies of reports; and registers of American citizens. These records include correspondence with local business firms and individuals; records of births, marriages, and deaths of American citizens in India and of the settlement of their estates; documents pertaining to the protection of American citizens; certificates of merchandise shipped from or received in the consular districts; journals of events and memoranda; financial records and property inventories of the posts; and

various maritime documents having to do with American ships and seamen.

Because India is a predominantly agricultural country, Indian agricultural resources and methods have been of interest to the United States. In the central files of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture (RG 16) are correspondence and reports relating to Indian agriculture, that were prepared by special agents of the Department and were sent to the Section of Foreign Markets, 1894-1905. These records contain information about Indian markets; reports made by consular officials and the Department's special agents to the various bureaus of the Department contain information of specific interest to those bureaus (namely, to the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, the Bureau of Animal Industry, the Food and Drug Administration, the Bureau of Plant Industry, and the Forest Service). These reports cover the period 1889-1940.

In the records of the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations and its predecessors (RG 166) are several series of reports, 1901-43, originating mainly with consular officials, agricultural trade commissioners, agricultural attachés, and special agents. These consist of reports on foreign agricultural production, market trends, prices, and consumption statistics, 1903-38; reports on all phases of forestry in foreign countries, assembled by the Forest Service, 1901-41; and cables giving current trends in agricultural production, marketing, and prices abroad, 1922-43. Also in this group are records relating to various international agricultural conferences, 1923-41. A fair amount of material relating to India will be found among these records. The types of reports vary considerably; some are very detailed, giving information on such matters as crop production and crop forecasts, tariffs and trade regulations, livestock and meat products, and foreign trade and economic conditions, while others are very general in character. The forestry and forest-product reports contain information on planting, lumbering, protection legislation, silviculture, and forest products. As in the case of the consular despatches, the reports from such places as Ceylon, Fiji, Mauritius, and the Straits Settlements have a bearing on India inasmuch as Indians in large numbers are engaged in agricultural activities in those places.

In the general files of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine and its predecessors, 1908-34, and in the correspondence

of the Federal Horticultural Board, 1912-28 (both in RG 7), is a variety of information about plant and insect life in India; for example, there are materials on mosquito control and malaria and on the culture of silkworms. The records of the Food and Drug Administration (RG 88) include at least two series that contain material relating to India. The first consists of records of the Office of the Supervising Tea Examiner, 1912-37, whose function was to examine and report on the quality of tea imported into the United States. As quite a large quantity of tea is imported from India, reports on such imports are among these records, but they are difficult to find as the arrangement of the records is by ports of entry and shipments and not by the origin of the consignment. The second series is on foreign food and drug laws, 1929-40. Reference has already been made to the Forest Service compilations among the general records of the Department of Agriculture. Further information about forestry in India, comparative studies of Indian and United States timbers, and similar topics can be found in the "Research Compilation File" in the records of the Forest Service (RG 95).

A good deal of commercial, financial, and industrial information on India is to be found in the records of the following agencies: the Bureau of the Census, 1800-1944 (RG 29), the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, 1906-43 (RG 151), the United States Tariff Commission, 1909-39 (RG 81), the United States Shipping Board, 1916-39 (RG 32), the War Trade Board, 1917-21 (RG 182), the Foreign Economic Administration, 1939-47 (RG 169), and the Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Foreign Trade, 1934-36 (RG 20). Trade commissioners' reports in RG 151 are particularly rich in relevant information. The reports were made monthly by trade commissioners attached to the consulates, some of them being required and many of them being voluntary. They consist of reports (containing statistics) on the foreign trade of India arranged by Indian ports, reports on the over-all foreign trade of the country, notes on specific items of export and import, summaries of annual trade and economic reviews, weekly financial reports, and reports on provincial and central budget and construction activities in India. These are supplemented by a sizable collection of photographs representing various phases of the economic life of the country. More specific data on trade between India and the United States are contained in the records of the Bureau of the Census (RG 29) in a series of import and export statistics, 1923-38, which gives monthly figures of imports

and exports by United States ports broken down by country, commodity, quantity, and value. Records of the collectors of customs (RG 36) give the sailings from Indian ports to various United States ports, 1789-1936. These records include cargo manifests, passenger lists, and crew lists. A very small quantity of information on Indian trade can also be found in the "Foreign Trade Information" series, 1919-39, of the War Finance Corporation (RG 154). Similarly, among the records of the Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Foreign Trade (RG 20), small quantities of materials relating to India for the period 1934-36 will be found in the general correspondence, in reports of special representatives on reciprocity information, and in special studies related to foreign commercial restrictions.

In the records of the War Trade Board (RG 182) there is somewhat fuller information on India's commercial economy during World War 1. In a series of country studies made by the Board's Bureau of Research and Statistics, there are studies on the economic situation of India before and during the war, reports on various industries and natural resources, and a memorandum on accumulated shortages or stocks of key commodities. In the records of the Bureau of War Trade Intelligence are studies on trade, industry, and joint stock companies in India. For similar information during the World War II period, the records of the Foreign Economic Administration and its predecessors (RG 169) are valuable. In this record group the records of the Office of Lend-Lease Administration, the Office of Economic Warfare, the President's Liaison Committee, and the British Empire Branch of the Administration's Bureau of Areas contain materials relating to India. They offer information on a variety of subjects like export controls, munitions production, industrial plants, port storage and transportation facilities, and agricultural production. A small number of photographs on Indian agriculture are included among these records.

Information regarding Indian tariff laws and tariff rates will be found in relevant parts of consular reports for the period 1909-39 among the records of the United States Tariff Commission (RG 81). Additional data concerning taxes and duties on American goods imported into India and discriminations against American shipping by the Government of India (1919-23) are among the records of the United States Shipping Board (RG 32). Also in this record group a series entitled "Trade Routes and Services" gives details covering the establishment of regular shipping service between India and the United States and the companies participating in this service. Logs

of ships plying this route often contain interesting bits of information about local events at the time the ships were in Indian ports, port regulations, weather conditions, and so forth. The general files of the Shipping Board contain some studies and consular reports on commerce and industries in India and Indian customs revenues. The ships' logs kept among the records of the United States Maritime Commission (RG 178) also contain interesting local information.

A matter of considerable interest to students of Indian affairs is Indian emigration. Contrary to popular belief, Indians from the very earliest times have ventured out of their own country and sought a new life in a new country. Reference has already been made to some of the countries where there are today substantial numbers of Indian settlers. Many went to the United States, too, under various circumstances and had varied receptions. Some went as students, some as missionaries and lecturers on Hindu philosophy and culture, some as businessmen, and others as mere travellers; some were political refugees who had from time to time shared in a number of abortive attempts to overthrow the British Government in India, while some were fortune seekers who like so many others looked upon the United States as the Land of Promise. On the whole their influx, with that of the Chinese and Japanese, was frowned upon. That gave rise to such organizations as the Asiatic Exclusion League, and much journalistic and legislative energy was expended on threshing the matter out. The general records of the Department of Justice (RG 60) and the records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (RG 85), the Senate (RG 46), and the House of Representatives (RG 233) abound in references to this controversy, to activities of the Indians in the United States, to immigration policies with regard to Indians in Canada, and to similar subjects. Records of the Senate Committees on Immigration through the years indicate the steps leading to the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924, popularly known as the Exclusion Act, while petitions and memoranda presented to the Committees on Immigration present the opinions of various classes of American people and organizations both for and against free Indian immigration. Stray references to India are also to be found in the records of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Foreign Relations dealing with consular services. Parallel information is contained in the records of the House of Representatives (RG 233).

More specific cases of Indians applying for citizenship and the decisions in such cases are recorded in the general files of the Immi-

gration and Naturalization Service (RG 85). This series also contains records of general policy discussions and consultations between United States and Canadian immigration authorities on Indian immigration into these two countries and information on the attempt by the Canadian Government to divert all Indians in Canada to British Honduras. Also in the general files are details of the interesting episode of the *Komagata Maru* and of the *Maverick* and *Annie Larsen* affair. In 1914 a rich Indian merchant chartered a Japanese ship, the *Komagata Maru,* and took over 300 Indians with the intention of landing them in Canada in defiance of the newly passed Canadian law restricting the entry of Indians. The attempt failed but not without creating a great sensation, which had its repercussions in rioting in Vancouver. The ship then sailed down the coast to Seattle where, again, the intending immigrants were not permitted to land. The *Maverick* and *Annie Larsen* affair was of a different type. In 1913 there was founded in India a revolutionary organization called the Yugantar Ashram, which had as its objective the overthrow of the British Government of India by force. Eventually most of its members who escaped the gallows sought refuge in the United States, Germany, and Japan. When World War I broke out those in the United States (who called their organization the Hindustan Ghadr Party) collected with the help of certain Germans arms and ammunitions to be sent to India for use by the revolutionaries still there. The plan miscarried and the two ships chartered for this purpose were seized while still in United States territorial waters and the cargo was confiscated. Some personal details relating to Indian revolutionaries in the United States are also in these files. Incidentally, a good deal of material on the activities of the Ghadr Party and on British discussions with the United States Government regarding it is to be found in the records of the United States Embassy in London (RG 59). More correspondence between the British Embassy and the State Department regarding restrictions on the export of arms and ammunitions to India and regarding the Ghadr Party is in the general files, 1898-1939, of the Bureau of Insular Affairs (RG 126). Personal details of Indians generally in the United States of America will be found in the re-entry permit and alien registry case files among the records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, while in the agricultural census records of the Census Bureau (RG 29) will be found details concerning a number of Indians who have settled in Arizona and California as farmers and agriculturists.

In the central files, 1790-1945, of the Department of Justice

(RG 60) is a fairly large collection of documents dealing with the activities of the Hindustan Ghadr Party, its relations with Germans during World War I, the noncooperation movement in India, activities of Hindu missionaries (Swamis) in California and elsewhere in the United States, and questions relating to the holding of land by Indians in the Western States. There are also among these records stray bits of information about Indian prison laws, enemy property held in India during World War I, the status of Indians under naturalization laws, the employment of Indian seamen on American ships, the eligibility of British Indians for United States citizenship, and the possibilities of marine transportation between India and the United States.

The Bureau of Insular Affairs (RG 126) collected from about 1901 to 1910 data on India because it was thought that the experiences of British government in India might serve as starting points in formulating United States policy in the Philippines. Hence there are reports on a system of cooperative banks, irrigation, the monetary system, trade regulations, health and sanitation, general administration, and the like. There are also documents dealing with the practice of Indians, normally not admitted to the United States, of stopping over at Manila for a short time in order to establish that as a starting point from which to go to the United States. An interesting series of claims exists among these records of old Portuguese and Spanish families who had migrated from India to the Philippines. Materials on foreign activities, 1927-29, in the general files of the Bureau of Reclamation (RG 115) contain reports on Indian irrigation, the construction of dams, the reclamation of waste lands, water power, water resources, commerce, and industries.

So far we have dealt with materials relating mainly to the economic and political life of India and the question of Indians in the United States. Several record groups in the National Archives have materials relating to other phases of Indian life. In the general files, 1897-1923, of the Public Health Service (RG 90) are reports on diseases prevalent in India such as cholera, plague, smallpox, malaria, leprosy, and dysentery. There are also mortality figures for various cities and for the country as a whole. Similar information for the period 1936-44 is to be found in the general classified records of the Foreign Governments Section of the Service; and information for the years prior to 1897 is contained in the National Board of Health records in the same group.

Two series among the records of the Hydrographic Office (RG 37)

contain a large quantity of materials relating to Indian waters, locations of places, ports, and meteorology. There is a good collection of maps and charts illustrating the above in the Cartographic Records Branch of the National Archives. The records of the Coast and Geodetic Survey (RG 23) contain reports on earthquakes and seismological registers from foreign countries, 1899-1943, including India. The records relating to India in both RG 37 and RG 23, however, are irregular and were collected incidentally, inasmuch as no regular survey of Indian waters was undertaken by the United States Government.

Other interesting materials are to be found in the "Interrogatory Files," 1897-1932, of the Bureau of the Mint (RG 104). This series contains reports on foreign coinage, statistical data, and correspondence, and, so far as India is concerned, it covers such topics as the amount of gold and silver coinage, coinage executed in India for other governments, the weight of gold and silver used in industrial arts and returned from industrial arts for monetary use, total imports into India of United States gold and silver, gold and silver production of Indian mines, laws affecting coinage, currency, banking, the import and export of gold, and the operation of mints.

Coming to more recent years, the records, 1941-45, of the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service (RG 173) include sound recordings, transcripts, and analyses of Indian shortwave broadcasts and broadcasts made from underground stations like Azad Hind, Avadian Indian, and India Freedom. The collection of gift motion pictures in the National Archives (RG 200) includes some interesting motion pictures on India. There are three "volumes" of the *March of Time,* two entitled *India in Crisis,* dated May and June 1942, and a third entitled *British Imperialism,* dated August 1944. Besides these there are a number of Paramount news reels depicting various aspects of Indian life from 1942 through 1948. Perhaps the most interesting films on India in the National Archives are those included in the series of "Thomas Armat" films. These consist of motion pictures produced in the early days of the industry by Pathé and others, many of them before 1900, and they include about 2,000 feet of film devoted to contemporary Indian scenes. Among the gift sound recordings in the National Archives (RG 201) there is a recording of Gandhi's speech at the Inter-Asian Relations Conference at New Delhi in 1947.

So much for bodies of records containing information about India that was deliberately collected. There is, in addition, a considerable stock of information on India in other record groups, which found

its way there more by chance than by deliberate effort. On the whole, these materials can be described as fragmentary and consist principally of isolated pieces. Such, for instance, are letters from officers commanding naval vessels that touched Indian waters or Indian ports, which are in the Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library (RG 45). For instance, among the letters of Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt of the Flagship *Ticonderoga*, during its cruise along the coasts of Africa and Asia in 1878-80, there are sparkling accounts of the British Government of South Africa, Aden, India, and the Malayan Peninsula and observations on the political, industrial, and commercial affairs of those countries. There are also journals and logs of certain British warships among these records, for example, those of H.M.S. *Ceres* on a voyage from London to Madras, Manila, and Canton and back to London, 1797-98, which contain a detailed description of the town and harbour of Madras, its people, and their manners and customs and drawings of Fort St. George. Such accounts are interesting and often include some references to contemporary incidents of local interest. Another interesting item in the Naval Records Collection is a journal of astronomical experiments and observations made by Sir William Burrough, Judge of the Supreme Court of Bengal, which contains his amendment of La Lande's methods of finding the longitude at sea based on observations made at Madras, Calcutta, and on the sea. The "area files" (area 10 and Indian Ocean), "captains' letters," "commanders' letters," and "squadron letters" in this record group contain a variety of information about India and the Indian seas.

Similarly, among the records of the Army War College (RG 165) there is a small quantity of materials relating to Indian army organization and to military incidents of interest. They are not in any organized series but are scattered throughout the whole body of records. Typical subject headings are: Military administration in India, Indian troops in France and Mesopotamia during World War I, and equipment, pay, and appointment of army officers. There are photographs of Indian troops in China during the Boxer rising in 1900-1901.

Among the records of the Weather Bureau (RG 27) are two series, meteorological observations, 1819-1942, and records of the Marine Division, 1842-1940, that contain meteorological data from Indian areas. The files of the General Director of the United States Railroad Administration (RG 14) include a small quantity of records dealing with the mileage and history of Indian railways compiled

in 1919. In correspondence files, 1942-46, of the Bureau of Aeronautics (RG 72) there is a reference to activities of Indian Army paratroops against the Hur banditti in Sind; the records of the Bureau of Lighthouses (RG 26) contain inquiries from the Government of India regarding radio beacons and the replies thereto. During World War II the Office of War Information received cables from all the war theatres and among them are cables from the China-Burma-India Theatre (RG 208). This record group also contains a few photographs of military actions in Burma. During the same period the activities of the Recreation Section of the Special Services Division of the Bureau of Naval Personnel extended to the China-Burma-India Theatre, and the records of those activities (RG 24) contain some references to the recreational facilities for soldiers available in India and the entertainment programmes for United States military personnel in that area.

The above does not by any means exhaust all the materials relating to India in the National Archives. Scattered among other record groups is much information, but it is difficult to find. For instance, in the records of the Alabama Claims Commission (RG 76) are documents relating to claims arising out of the depredations of the *Florida*, which sank, among others, a ship carrying a cargo of saltpetre from India for the Duponts. Among the papers filed in connection with that claim are returns of Indian trading houses and shipping agents. Another example is the material relating to the passing of an act of April 23, 1918 (40 Stat. 535), among the records of the Senate (RG 46) and the House of Representatives (RG 233). One purpose of this legislation was to help Britain counteract German propaganda in India during World War I. In fact, even where there was no direct contact between India and the United States, India formed part or even sometimes the basis of some transactions between the United States and Great Britain, and a thorough examination of records relating to United States-British relations will undoubtedly bring to light much that will relate to India and will help explain incidents in India.

# THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCHIVISTS *

THE First International Congress of Archivists, organized by the International Council on Archives in collaboration with the Archives Nationales of France and Association of the Professional Archivists of France, met in Paris from 21 to 26 August 1950. All countries having membership of the United Nations were invited to participate in the Conference. The archivists from Spain and Germany could attend as individuals. The attendance was fairly good; approximately 350 archivists from 30 countries were present. Dr P. M. Joshi, Director of Archives, Government of Bombay, was the only Indian archivist who participated in the Congress. The Director of Archives to the Government of India was unable to attend.

Before the formal opening of the Congress on 23 August the Constituent Assembly (the authoritative body of the International Council on Archives) and Executive Board of the Council held a series of business meetings at UNESCO House on 21-22 August. These meetings began with a message of welcome from Mr Jaime Torres Bodet, Director General of UNESCO, assuring the Council of the continued interest of UNESCO in the growth of its activities.

The principal business before the Constituent Assembly included the revision of the Constitution, the election of new office-bearers and the selection of the place and date for the next Congress of Archivists. The Constituent Assembly elected the following new officers:

President: M. Charles Braibant (France); Vice-Presidents: Dr Wayne C. Grover and Dr D. P. M. Graswinckel (U.S.A. and Holland); Treasurer: M. Guy Duboscq (France); Secretary-General: Dr Lester K. Born. Among the six members of the Executive Board India has found a place by the election of Dr Purnendu Basu, the former Officiating Director of Archives to the Government of India.

It was decided to hold the next Congress after three years at The Hague. The Executive Board, which is the continuing Committee of the Council, will meet once a year.

The Assembly also discussed on the second day the present and future activities of the I.C.A. and it passed a resolution requesting UNESCO to set up a special division on archives as it had already

* Based mainly on the Report on the Conference by Miss Margaret G. Norton, published in *The American Archivist*, January 1951—By kind permission.

done for libraries. It called for the creation of a special committee to study the effectiveness of efforts to preserve archives during the last war, to compile reports from each country and to prepare a set of standards for preservation of archives in war which could be brought to the attention of each government. The Assembly also endorsed the principle of free access to archives and exchange of copies of records as being one of the objectives of the Council.

The Congress of Archivists was inaugurated on 23 August by Mons. P. O. Lapie, Minister for National Education of France. The work sessions were devoted, according to the plan formulated earlier, to four important questions which are of great interest to all those who have the custody of archival materials, viz. (1) Control of Archives in Formation, (2) Archives and Microphotography, (3) Economic (Private) Archives, and (4) Bibliographical Publications. The discussions were organized in a similar way; each started with a general report by the *rapporteur* of the section, containing a summary of the answers to the questionnaire sent to all invited countries. These reports, except for the one on Economic Archives, were printed and distributed to the members in advance of the sectional meetings. The summaries presented by the *rapporteurs* and the discussions which followed gave for the first time a general survey and synthesis of the common problems faced by the archivists all over the world and indicated some of the ways in which they were endeavouring to resolve their difficulties.

The first work session devoted to the problem of Archives in Formation was presided over by Dr D. P. M. Graswinckel, Director of the Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague. The general report on the subject was prepared by a specialist Mons. Pierre Caillet, Conservateur de la Section Moderne aux Archives Nationales, Paris. This document shows that in almost every country there exists or has been in contemplation a central depot of archives intended to receive, in whole or in part, the records of the public administration. The difficulties which beset archival repositories in the task of proper preservation of records are also reflected in the replies to the questionnaire. The most acute problems are those of shortage of space and want of trained personnel in view of the growing bulk of modern archives. Mons. Caillet pointed out that the problem to be solved in this field was a double one of authority and of organization. He spoke about the position of the Directorate of Archives in France and the proposal for its being set up as a separate Department directly under the President of the Council. Seven delegates participated in the discus-

sion which followed the reading of Mons. Caillet's report. Sir Hilary Jenkinson in winding up the debate said that the points raised took different aspects in different countries, that liaison should be maintained between departments and archivists, and that archivists should aid in the formulation of principles for the destruction of records.

The second session on Archives and Microphotography was presided over by Mr Richard J. Hayes, Director of the National Library of Ireland and the proceedings began with a general report prepared by Dr Lester K. Born of the Library of Congress. The replies to the questionnaire indicated that most archivists, except principally those of the United States, have had insufficient experience with this comparatively new technique to permit the formulation of principles at this stage. Dr Born confined most of his remarks to those applications of microphotography with which archivists and scholars were most familiar and concerning which they were in unanimous agreement, namely, to the preservation and diffusion of archives of cultural importance. In conclusion he proposed the creation by the International Council on Archives of an International Committee, whose task it would be to (*a*) study the problems peculiar to the intensification of microfilming in the domain of national and international science ; and (*b*) report to the members of the International Council on Archives and to all countries of the world the constructive results of their work, not only in the domain of technique, but also in that of international exchanges and of the freedom of mutual access to archives and other original documents. Delegates from Austria, France and Italy participated in the discussion. Mons. Georges Bourgin, Honorary Director of the Archives of France, agreed as to the importance of microfilming as a means for providing security copies of originals, for supplementing the historical source materials in libraries, for the exchange of copies of archives in which two countries were interested and other similar purposes. But, he pointed out that microphotography has limitations. He warned archivists to go very slowly in the matter of destroying original records after microfilming them. Signora Rosa Maria Borsarelli, Archivist of the State Archives of Turin, described the practical difficulties involved in the microfilming of the Nice and Naples archives which were returned to France by Italy. She pointed out that for the preparation of the order in which documents were to be microfilmed the presence of an archivist was essential by the side of the technician. Mr H. Meinert, Director of the State Archives at Frankfort, expressed

the view that microfilming was only an auxiliary means and should not be allowed to overshadow the essential tasks of the archivist on whom alone devolved the responsibility for the selection of documents for preservation. Mons. Charles Laroche, Archivist in the Ministry of External Affairs of France, also warned his colleagues against the excess of microfilming for substitution of original records and declared himself against the complete destruction of fonds. He said that archivists must have respect for original documents.

The Chairman, Mr Hayes, supported the proposal that there should be an exchange of microfilm copies of documents of interest to scholars. He also warmly approved of the proposals made by Dr Born and expressed the hope that the International Council on Archives would take immediate action and create a committee on microphotography.

Dr Wayne C. Grover, Archivist of the United States, presided over the session on 'Private (Economic) Archives'. Sir Hilary Jenkinson gave a verbal report, the major part of which related to the general organization of archives in England and in which the subject of business archives was treated subsidiarily. Mr Nils Holm, Archivist of the Royal Archives of Sweden, pointed out that one of the most serious problems in connection with preservation of economic archives was that the demands of the historian and of the technician clashed; that it was the function of the archivist to put the different types of archives into an order suitable for both types of users. Mons. Georges Bourgin reported that the Directorate of Archives of France had been ordered to collect archives in danger of destruction and to acquire papers from private individuals. He also gave an account of the efforts made in France for passing legislation regarding the preservation of private archives and the need for developing social archives especially records of small business and lesser known men for the study of social and economic life. Riccardo Filangieri de Candida Gonzaga, Inspector General of the State Archives of Italy, described the Naples project for collecting the records of economic life of that city. It appeared from his report that since 1909 the state archives had collected 200,000 documents on Italian banking, dating back to the thirteenth century.

The question of what publication activities should be undertaken by the International Council on Archives was discussed at the concluding session of the Conference. Dr Emilio Re, Inspector General of the Archives of Italy, reported that four principal projects had been suggested by the replies to the questionnaire, viz., a catalogue

(repertoire) of guides to archives, an international glossary of archival terms, an international year book of archives and the establishment of an international review of archives. There appeared to be a unanimous opinion in favour of publication of an index to various inventories, guides and other finding aids made by archival agencies and of an international year book of archives, though conflicting views were expressed regarding the forms these publications should take. About a dozen countries had proposed the publication of an international journal on archives and the proposal received warm support from many delegates to the Conference. Mons. Charles Samaran, the retiring President, proposed a series of resolutions addressed to UNESCO, all of which were passed, requesting UNESCO (1) to undertake the project of publishing an international review on archives ; (2) to publish a general directory of published calendars and to set up a card file of indexes to archival finding lists ; and (3) to sponsor an international census of mediaeval economic source materials. The year book and census of archival agencies projects were set aside temporarily in order to give precedence to the directory of calendars.

Independently of these meetings the members of the Congress were invited to see the new fittings of the Archives Nationales, particularly the ones for photo-duplication work and restoration of documents. Another important feature of the Conference was the organisation of an international exhibition devoted to "Seals and Heraldry in Art and Life from the Middle Ages to Our Day" held in the Palais Soubise. England, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland and France had loaned for display their most interesting seals and heraldic representations. The exhibits were very attractively arranged and won the admiration of those who had an occasion to see them.

A round of social events gave an opportunity to the delegates from different countries to come into close touch with each other in an atmosphere of international understanding and to discuss their common problems informally. The first informal function was a reception at the UNESCO House on the morning of 22 August. On the following day the delegates visited the library of the Musée de l'Homme at the Palais de Chaillot and were entertained to a sumptuous banquet at the Eiffel Tower as guests of the Forges de Strasbourg. On 24 August Mons. Charles Braibant, the Director of Archives of France and Madame Braibant gave a garden party at their official residence, situated in a corner of the archives compound,

The end of the visit of the archivists to Paris was marked by an excursion into Normandy where they got an opportunity to enjoy the landscape of one of the most beautiful provinces of France. They also visited the Archives Departmentales at Evreux and were greatly interested to see a provincial repository administered in accordance with the most modern technique.

# CORRESPONDENCE

*The Editors will be glad to receive for publication letters and communications dealing with archives, manuscript studies and related subjects. They, however, do not hold themselves responsible for opinions expressed by their correspondents.*

## ANCIENT INDIAN CARTOGRAPHY*

There is no special word in Sanskrit for 'a map'. The word *nakshā* (from Arabic *naqshah*) has been adopted in most modern Indian languages in this sense, although it also signifies 'a picture, a plan, a general description, an official report.' In Eastern India, the word *māna-chitra* has been coined to indicate the English word 'map'. The absence of any special Sanskrit word raises the question whether map drawing was at all known to the Indians of old. There is, however, reason to believe that in ancient India a map or chart was regarded as a *chitra* or *ālekhya,* i.e. 'a painting, a picture, a delineation.' It will be seen that the Sanskrit word *chitra* and its synonyms have practically the same meaning as the Arabic word *naqshah.*

Act I of the *Uttararāmacharita* by Bhavabhūti, who flourished in the eighth century A.D., is styled "the inspection of the painting". It is said that a painter (*chitrakara*) painted along a walk (*vīthikā*) the experiences (*charita*) of the Ikshvāku king Rāma of Ayōdhyā in Daṇḍakāraṇya, Kishkindhyā, Laṅkā and other places, according to the instructions of the king's brother Lakshmaṇa who had accompanied Rāma to the forests. These paintings included some which are said to have depicted particular regions and may be regarded as sort of maps. One of the paintings seems to have been conceived as showing the Prasravaṇa hill as "extending to the heart of Janasthāna whose darkness is deepened by perpetually pouring clouds and whose caves ring with the flow of the Godāvarī which is embraced by the forests at the skirts that are of a uniformly mild blue colour because of the dense rows of trees" (ed. S. Ray, Calcutta, 1934, p. 106). The reference to forests painted in mild blue colour is interesting. Another picture of the nature of a map in the same context is introduced by Lakshmaṇa to Rāma and Sītā in the following words: "Here is the tract (*bhāga*) of the Daṇḍaka forest known as Chitrakuñjavat to the west of Janasathāna, haunted by the headless giant Danu ; this is the site (*pada*) of the hermitage of Mataṅga on the Ṛishyamūka hill ; this again is the emaciated Śábara woman named Sramaṇa ; this is the celebrated lake called Pampā" (ibid., p. 121).

The above references to map-like paintings in an eighth century Sanskrit drama remind us of the following remarks of Wilford made

* This note has been written by Mr. D. C. Sircar in response to Col. R. H. Phillimore's letters on the subject of 'Indigenous Indian Maps' published in *The Indian Archives,* Vol. IV, pp. 43-44.

about a century and a half ago: "Besides geographical tracts, the Hindus have also maps of the world both according to the system of the Pauraṇics and of the astronomers; the latter are very common. They have also maps of India and of particular districts, in which latitudes and longitudes are entirely out of question and they never make use of a scale of equal parts. The sea shores, rivers and ranges of mountains are represented by straight lines. The best map of this sort I ever saw was one of the kingdom of Nepal presented to Mr. Hastings. It was about four feet long and two and a half broad, of paste board, and the mountains raised about an inch above the surface, with trees painted all round. The roads were represented by a red line and the rivers by a blue one. The various ranges were very distinct with the narrow passes through them: in short, it wanted but a scale. The valley of Nepal was accurately delineated; but toward the borders of the map everything was crowded and in confusion" (*Asiatic Researches,* Vol. VIII, 1805, pp. 270-71; cf. pp. 267-334; Vol. X, pp. 127-57). The map of Nepal noticed by Wilford appears to have been of the same type as the painting of the Chitrakuñjavat region of Daṇḍakāraṇya conceived by Bhavabhūti. The Indian maps mentioned by Wilford were probably uninfluenced by foreigners, as otherwise he would have added a note on the point. Unfortunately, Wilford does not say anything about the antiquity of the Indian maps noticed by him. The one of Nepal, of which he has given some details, could not have been early.

A good deal of information on early Indian cartography under Hindu and Muslim inspiration is given by Francesco L. Pullé in his interesting work in Italian, entitled *La Cartografia Antica dell' India,* Parte I (*Studi Italiani di Filologia Indo-Iranica, Vol. IV*), Firenze, 1901. In section II of the work (pp. 8-44), dealing with Indian sources, there are reproductions of three maps drawn by ancient Indian cartographers according to the Puranic ideas of cosmography and geography. As is well known, the world was regarded as consisting of seven concentric islands, each one of them encircled by a sea. The island at the centre was called Jambudvīpa, the southern division of which was called Bhāratavarsha, bounded by the Himalayas in the north and the waters of the sea in the other directions. Two (figures 2 at p. 16 and 8 at p. 33) of the three maps have been reproduced from a manuscript of the *Lokaprakāsa* which seems to have been originally composed by the celebrated Kashmirian polymath Kshemendra in the eleventh century A.D. but contains a good deal of much later interpolation (cf. Stein, *Raj. tar.*, trans., Vol. II, p. 313), while the third (figure 9 at p. 34) from a manuscript of another work entitled *Saṁgrahaṇī.* Figure 2 represents the concentric islands and the encircling seas, while figures 8 and 9 are representations of Jambudvīpa. The map of Jambudvīpa published in Gladwyn's translation of the *Ain-i-Akbarī,* Vol. I, was no doubt copied from an original like those found in the manuscripts of the *Lokaprakāśa* and *Saṁgrahaṇī,* noticed by Pullé. Similar maps were found by Wilford in a

manuscript of a work entitled *Kshetrasamāsa* and were characterised by him as "several fanciful delineations of the world" (*Asiatic Researches,* Vol. VIII, p. 269). The cosmographical map from a Tibetan Buddhist source reproduced in figure 4 (at p. 23) of Pullé's work is also interesting in this connection as its origin is certainly Indian. It is, however, difficult to say whether other Tibetan drawings such as the sketch of the Cathedral of Lhāsa published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Vol. LXIV, 1895, Part I, Plate XXVI, were similarly of Indian inspiration. Figure 5 (at p. 25) in Pullé's book is a Hindu map of Jambudvīpa and its surroundings. This is of a slightly different kind. In it, the egg-shaped island is surrounded by nine circles in a row each representing a *graha.* In another row, encircling the grahas, are given the twelve *rāśis* each in an oval. Figure 6 (at p. 29) is the representation of the *nava-khaṇḍa* or the nine subdivisions of India. In figures 10 (at p. 36) and 11 (at p. 37) Pullé has copied two maps of Jambudvīpa from Wilford. These are drawn after two slightly different cosmographic conceptions of the ancient Indians. On the authority of Rennel and Santarem (*Cosmographie et Cartographie,* Paris, 1852, I, p. 364), Pullé also speaks of an old geographical map incised on a copper plate, which was discovered at Monghyr (*op. cit.,* p. 12).

In section VII (pp. 139-58) of Pullé's work, dealing with Indian cartography from Persian and Arabic sources, we have several interesting maps. Figure 35 (at p. 142) represents India according to an old Persian map of the earth. A map after that of Ibn Haukal (975 A.D.) is given in figure 36 (at p. 147) and another from Edrisi (1154 A.D.) in figure 37 (at p. 156).

With reference to the knowledge of map making among the people of India, especially the Dravidians of the south, the following remarks in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th ed.), Vol. XIV, pp. 840-41, are also interesting. "The charts in use by the medieval navigators of the Indian ocean—Arabs, Persians or Drāviḍaṣ—were equal in value, if not superior, to the charts of the Mediterranean. Marco Polo (thirteenth century) mentions such charts; Vasco da Gama (1498) found them in the hands of his Indian pilot, and their nature is fully explained in the *Mohit* or the encyclopaedia of the sea, compiled from ancient sources by the Turkish admiral, Sidi Ali Ben Hosein in 1584. These charts are covered with a close network of lines intersecting each other at right angles. The horizontal lines are parallels, depending upon the altitude of the Pole Star, the Calves of the Little Bear and the Barrow of the Great Bear above the horizon. This altitude was expressed in *isbas* or inches, each equivalent to 1° 42′50″. Each *isba* was divided into *zams* or eighths. The intervals between two parallels thus only amounted to 12′51″. These intervals were mistaken by the Portuguese occasionally for degrees, which account for Malacca, which is in Latitude 2′13″ N., being placed in Cantino's chart (1502) in latitude 14′S. It may have been a map of this kind which accounts for Ptolemy's moderate

exaggerations (in the second century A.D.) of the size of Taprobane (Ceylon). The first meridian, separating a leeward from a windward region, passed through Ras Kumhari (Comorin) and was thus nearly identical with the first meridian of the Indian astronomer, which passed through the sacred city of Ujjain (Ozéné of Ptolemy) or the meridian of Azīn of the Arabs. Additional meridians were drawn at intervals of *zams,* supposed to be equal to three hour's sail". The suggestion seems to be that the Indians had the knowledge of making maps as early as the beginning of the Christian era and that the Arabs and Greeks were indebted to them for the charts of the Indian Ocean together with the islands in and the lands bordering on it.

D. C. SIRCAR
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# NEWS NOTES

## INDIA

### *The National Archives of India*

Dr. Purnendu Basu, Officiating Director of Archives, went on deputation on 1st April, 1951 to the United Nations Archives, New York, and Mr. P. N. Kirpal, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Education, took charge. On his being deputed to the UNESCO Conference, Dr. (Mrs.) Bina Chatterjee, Under Secretary, Ministry of Education, was appointed to officiate as the Director from 13th June, 1951.

The post of Preservation Officer which fell vacant on the departure of Mr. S. C. Chakravorti, in March 1950, was filled by the appointment of Mr. R. C. Gupta in October last.

The accessions of records during 1950 from the various Ministries of the Government of India totalled 5,429 bundles, each comprising about 200 files. The bulk of these archives—about 5,000 bundles—was received from the Ministries of States and External Affairs. The transfer of the records of the defunct British Residencies and Political Agencies continued, as in the previous years. Among the recent accruals are records belonging to the late Bundelkhand Agency from 1804 to 1947. These papers form a unique body of source materials on the history of Bundelkhand and the neighbouring regions. The authorities of the Madras Port Trust have presented to the National Archives the personal file of the eminent Indian mathematician, the late Mr. S. Ramanujam, which throws light on his biography. With the closing of the Secretariat of the Constituent Assembly of India, some records of historical importance were transferred to the National Archives, the most significant being the Signature Register of the Members and the copy of the Constitution of India with the signatures of the members. The acquisition programme of the National Archives had to be slowed down considerably because of the shortage of stack space.

Among the historical manuscripts recently received by the Department for custody is *Waqai-Jang-i-Kohistan,* a Persian manuscript containing an eye-witness account of the British campaign against Nepal in 1814-15. Some *sanads* and *farmans* in Persian have also been acquired.

The collection of microfilms of foreign records of Indian interest has been further enriched by the acquisition of micro-copies of documents available in several British, French and Dutch repositories. The microfilming of the manuscripts in the British Museum was continued, and copies of several items of Indian interest, including the large collection of private and official papers of Warren Hastings, George Lord Macartney and Lord Wellesley, were made. The John

Rylands Library, Manchester, has supplied microfilm copies of a large number of documents relating to the affairs of the East India Company. These include (1) the papers of Richard Johnson, who served in India during the period of Warren Hasting's Governor-Generalship, and who rose to the position of Resident at Hyderabad in 1784; (2) the papers and transcripts of manuscripts which belonged to John Charles Mason (1798-1881), who was appointed in 1837 as Secretary of the Marine Branch of the Secretary's Office of the East India Company, and who later on in 1859 became the Secretary of the Marine and Transport Department of the East India House; (3) *Melville Papers* consisting of over 2,000 letters and papers of Henry Dundas relating to Indian affairs and the East India Company, which were bought by the Library at Sotheby's sales; and (4) *Pitt's Papers* containing some letters written by Henry Dundas (1793-1805) as the President of the Board of Control. Preparation is also being made to undertake the microfilming of records of Indian interest at the Public Record Office, London, which possesses private and semi-official papers of Cornwallis, Ellenborough, Chatham, Grenville and John Russel, apart from official records of the British Government. As a preliminary step the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London is preparing a descriptive inventory of records relating to modern Indian history on behalf of the National Archives of India.

The microfilming of the historical manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, has also begun after selection of suitable materials including everything of importance to India in the series known as "Nouvelles Acquisitions". The Department has already received some rolls of these microfilms through the Indian Embassy in Paris. The Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague, undertook some time ago to copy the 17th century records of the Dutch East India Company for the National Archives of India, and has been sending microfilm copies in small instalments. A search for further manuscripts of Indian interest available in foreign repositories is continuing.

The Department has also undertaken to prepare in its Photo-duplication Branch microfilm copies of the series of old records in its custody, both with the object of ensuring their safety and promoting their use for research purposes. Several important documents, such as Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet Papers (1845-57), Sambalpur Papers (1849-59), and Bengal Original Political Consultations (1834-43) have been microfilmed, and the copying of the Home Public Proceedings (1748-1859) has been undertaken. The manuscripts belonging to the Research Department of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir have been copied on 4,600 ft. of film.

The Research Laboratory has been carrying on researches in connection with problems of preservation of records peculiar to India. An item which deserves special mention was the experiment which was conducted to prepare an adhesive for use in chiffoning some old

paper manuscripts which were coated with clay. As the paste used for this purpose had the effect of dissolving the clay coating and with it the writing on the manuscript, attempts were made to use plastic adhesive. The results so far obtained are quite encouraging, and further investigations are being made. Other experiments recently conducted by the Laboratory relate to humidity control by use of hygroscopic salts, ultraviolet ray absorption of glasses of different colours, and preservation of pencil writing.

Among the recent publications of the Department the most noteworthy is the volume of *Sanskrit Documents* which has just been brought out by the Ganganath Jha Research Institute of Allahabad, on behalf of the National Archives of India. The printing of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence,* Vol. IX (1790-91) has been completed, and it is expected to be shortly issued for sale. Vol. VIII of this Series is still in the press.

The Hon'ble Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, paid a visit to the National Archives of India on 10th July, 1950. The President spent some time studying the activities of the various branches of the Department.

### *The Central Record Office, Madras*

The records of the Government of Madras have been brought back from Chittoor to the Central Record Office building situated in Egmore, Madras. It will be recalled that these archives were evacuated to Chittoor in 1942 for security reasons. The State Government ordered for their return on 11th July, 1950, and within two months the entire body of the State's records was transferred from the war time repository to their permanent home. This change has been of immense help to research workers and administrators who found it difficult to utilize the records at Chittoor. Some other offices still occupy a portion of the Record Office building, and until they are shifted elsewhere it will not be possible for the Central Record Office to accept the custody of records of the High Court (1800-1900), district records (1857-1900) and records of the merged states which are to be transferred to it.

The accrual of records during 1950-51 included 346 bundles of Secretariat records for 1945-46, a large number of Proceeding Volumes of the Board of Revenue from the Office of the Collector of Madras, 214 bundles of Board's Proceedings of the Forest Series (1900-22) from the Chief Conservator of Forests, and 143 bundles of records of the Government Solicitor's Office from 1840 to 1857. The Strong Room documents accessioned during the year and numbering 8253 chiefly consist of legal deeds relating to land mortgage banks and house building societies, transferred by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Deputy Registrars of various districts in the State.

The Dutch and Danish records which have been in the custody of the Madras Record Office for many years have now been given by

the Government of India to the Madras Government on a quasi-permanent loan. The Madras Record Office will have full control over them subject to keeping them open for inspection by an authorised officer of the Government of India, and will seek the approval of the Central Government before any of those records are destroyed or otherwise disposed of.

The Record Office rendered valuable service to the Land Reforms Committee set up by the Madras Government, by supplying information on different aspects of the land problem, *viz.*, fragmentation and sub-division, consolidation, economic holdings, alienation, occupancy rights, absentee landlordism, etc.

The publication programme of the Madras Government which covers the publication (1) *in extenso* of all the main series of the records of the period 1751-65, (2) of the calendars of the Military Country Correspondence from 1750 to 1765, and of the revenue records from 1765 to 1800, and (3) of selections from the records of the period 1800 to 1857, is making steady progress. All records of the period before 1750 have already been published *in extenso* and several volumes of records of 1751-65 have been printed. The publication of the rest of the volumes of this period has been held up because of printing difficulties. The Calendars of Military Records are ready for the press and will be published as soon as the requisite facilities are available for their printing. (Dr. B. S. Baliga, Curator, Madras Record Office).

### *The Records Department, West Bengal*

The Report of the Keeper of Records of the Government of West Bengal for 1949 which has just been published, shows that old records of the State continued to be kept at Berhampur. During the year under review, 74,025 papers, including Passport Papers of 1943 numbering 583 and those of 1944 numbering 753, were accessioned. According to the agreement between the Governments of the two parts of Bengal, the East Bengal Government's share of current records continued to be sent to them in small instalments. The Dutch and Danish records in the custody of the West Bengal Government have been given by the Central Government on a quasi-permanent loan, as in the case of similar archives in the Madras Record Office.

Mr. Hari Kumar Banerji retired from the post of Keeper of Records in August 1949, and was succeeded by Mr. Jahar Lal Majumdar. The latter relinquished his office a year later, and Mr. Sankar Nath Dutt was appointed on 31st August, 1950.

### *The Central Record Office, Allahabad*

The Uttar Pradesh Central Record Office is making appreciable progress in centralizing the archives of the State. Preparation of an inventory of the records at the headquarters and in the districts has

been taken up with a view to transferring them to the Central Record Office, and lists of pre-Mutiny records of Badaun, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Kanpur and Mainpuri districts have been completed. The preparation of the press-list of the Garhwal district records is in progress. These records contain interesting details about the administrative, social and religious history of the region during the 18th and 19th centuries. Among the revenue records of the State are to be found a large number of *farmans* of the Mughal period.

The Central Record Office has now a small mending and preservation unit, and arrangements have been made for fumigation and dusting of records with vacuum cleaners. (Dr. G. N. Saletore, Keeper of Records).

### *The Secretariat Record Office, Bombay*

The Secretariat Record Office, Bombay, which is housed in a part of the Elphinstone College building, is facing acute shortage of accommodation both for the staff and for stacking records. This is a great obstacle to the development of its activities. Apart from the normal accrual of official records, the Bombay Record Office is acquiring historical manuscripts from private sources. The office has also recently received a photostatic copy of an important Persian Manuscript entitled *Guldasta-i-Gulshan-i-Razdar Tarif-i-Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah* from the Cambridge University Library. The manuscript written by a contemporary chronicler deals with the history of Bijapur under Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627-1656). Photographic copies have also been obtained of some *farmans* of the Adil Shahi and Qutb Shahi regimes from the Hyderabad Record Office, and of two *farmans* of the family of the famous Maratha poet, Vaman Pandit from Shri Kanole of Nander. The office expects to get very soon for deposit the records of the Surat Agency (1800-1907) which are at present housed at the Collectorate of Surat. These papers were preserved in the Office of the Agent of Surat since the beginning of the direct British rule in that city (1800 A.D.). A part of the records relates to debts, mortgages and other monetary transactions and succession disputes of the family of the Nawab of Surat, while others give the political relations of Surat with the petty States of Mandvi, Dharampur and Bansda.

Among the latest publications of the Bombay Government is the *Poona Residency Correspondence*, Vol. XII, covering the first four years of Elphinstone's Embassy at the Peshwa's Court (1811-1815). Vol. XIII of the Series will contain the records of the latter half of the period of Elphinstone's stay at Poona as Resident. The printing of Vol. X and Vol. XIV of the Series has also been completed. Vol. X deals with the treaty of Bassein and the Anglo-Maratha War in the Deccan (1802-1804), and Vol. XIV contains the correspondence of Residents at Sindhia's Court for the years 1810-18. The State Government hope to publish very shortly a descriptive catalogue of the

pre-1820 records in the Secretariat Record Office. (Dr. P. M. Joshi, Director of Archives).

*The Record Offices of Baroda and Kolhapur*

In view of the decision of the Bombay Government to transfer the district and divisional records of Baroda and Kolhapur Record Offices to the appropriate district and divisional authorities, the staff of the two offices has been reduced. These offices in future will look after only historical and non-current records. The post of the Raj-Daftardar of the Baroda Record Office has been redesignated as Superintendent of Records. In Kolhapur the post of the Director of Records and Archaeology has been abolished, and the Record Office has been placed in charge of a Head Clerk. The district and divisional authorities in Gujarat have found it difficult to take over the records relating to their offices due to want of suitable accommodation. The Baroda Record Office, in addition to the archives already existing there, has received for deposit the Crown Representative's records from the Mahikantha and Banaskantha Agencies, and also military records of the former Baroda State Forces. The charge of the Revenue and Judicial records in Kolhapur Record Office has been taken over by the Collector and the District Judge, though the records continue to be housed in the former Huzur Record Office.

*The Alienation Office, Poona*

On the abolition of the post of the Commissioner, Central Division, the administrative control over the Alienation Office has passed to the Settlement Commissioner, Poona. The officer immediately in charge of the Office is now the Alienation Officer. The Director of Archives of Bombay continues to supervise the research activities of the Office, and is responsible for the proper preservation, up-keep and publication of the Alienation Office records. The Advisory Committee of the Office held nine meetings during the year ending 31st March, 1951, and passed several resolutions relating to the preservation and publication of the records in the *Peshwa Daftar*. The State Government have accepted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee according to which the applicants wishing to inspect records for writing family history or history of a State, purely from research point of view, have been placed on the same footing as research students from Universities or research institutions.

*The Indian Historical Records Commission—27th Session, Nagpur, December, 1950*

The twenty-seventh annual session of the Indian Historical Records Commission was held at Nagpur on 25-26th December, 1950. Owing to the unavoidable absence of the Hon'ble Maulana Abul

Kalam Azad, Minister for Education, Government of India and *ex-officio* President of the Commission, the meeting was presided over by Dr. Tara Chand, Educational Adviser to the Government of India. His Excellency Shri Mangaldas Pakvasa, Governor of Madhya Pradesh, inaugurated the session on 25th December. While reviewing the activities of the Commission, His Excellency paid a high tribute for the wide field of work already covered. He laid special emphasis on the acquisition of historical materials and their proper use. He said, "But let us not like misers collect the materials only and even arrange them without any further use being made of these riches. Let not the rich materials be the glory of the few by their possession but they must be so used as may render a valuable service to the people in present times and be helpful guide for the future."

In his presidential address, the Hon'ble Maulana Abul Kalam Azad stressed on the value of records for true interpretation of history and the problems confronting the National Archives of India. The Hon'ble Minister said, "National Archives are in all countries the treasure house of their historical wealth, and we in India can justly take pride for the extent and magnitude of our riches in this field. Our National Archives contains a vast collection of records but systematic series begin from 1672. Some of the latest records are as late as 1949. They, therefore, tell the story of near upon 300 years of India's history of a most interesting and momentous period". It was further stated that to this had been added a mass of very important series of records which were in the possession of the British Residencies and the Political Agencies. "Of these, the National Archives has already received the records of 14 Residencies and 11 Political Agencies..... These transferred records number 11,555 volumes, and 3,581 bundles, and cover a period from 1672 to 1949." He further emphasised the need of studying records lying in private custody, and said, "we know that during the Moghul period, India had all the instruments of civilised government and that full records were kept of all official decisions and happenings. Unfortunately, most of these records were destroyed during the troubled period of the 18th century. In consequence, we have lost some of the most valuable sources of our knowledge of the age. It is, however, fortunate that the histories written by Abul Fazal, Abdul Hamid Lahori, Khafi Khan and others based on official records are available to us." With this huge mass of official and acquired papers the National Archives was confronted with the difficult problems of proper preservation, housing and utilisation. The Hon'ble Minister added "I would like to give members of the Commission some idea of the magnitude of the task which faces the National Archives to-day. In 1939, it was little more than a medium size depository, with a limited body of records. Today, it is one of the leading archival institutions in the world, and is certainly the largest in Asia."

The next item was the reading of papers. Twenty papers were contributed and discussions were held on twelve. A very interesting

paper on the "Introduction of Experimental Visual Telegraph Communication by the Government of India" was contributed by Col. R. H. Phillimore of the late Royal Engineers & Survey of India. Mr. Arun Kumar Das Gupta, Lecturer in History in the Central College, Calcutta, gave valuable information regarding the system of communications prevailing in the early nineteenth century. Other papers were on a variety of topics based on original and unpublished documents. "The Correspondence of Modave" by S. P. Sen, "Gangadhar Shastri" by K. K. Datta, and the "Boundary Disputes between the British and Mayurbhanj in the 18th century" by Tarit Kumar Mukherji deserve special mention.

The Business Meeting of the Commission began on the morning of 26th December, with an unanimous vote of condolence on the death of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs, Government of India.

The Indian Historical Records Commission considered a variety of proposals, the more important of which related to (i) the compilation of the National Register of Records on an experimental basis in the States of Delhi and East Punjab; (ii) the recognition by all State Governments of Archives Administration as a technical work; (iii) the employment of diploma holders in State Record Offices; (iv) the proper maintenance of records by the Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments; and (v) the grant of stipends for training.

A historical exhibition was organized in connection with the session of the Commission. Very interesting exhibits which were displayed in the exhibition were received from the National Archives of India; the Secretariat Record Room, Madhya Pradesh; the Mahakoshal Historical Society; Government of Bihar; Sri S. G. Chatte of Nagpur; the Gram-Joshi family of Nagpur; Sardar Vankat Rao Gujar; Sardar Yashwant Rao Gujar; Shrimanta Madhao Rao Gangadharao Chitnavis; the Nagpur Mahavidyalaya; the Jagannath Temple Historical Research Society, Puri; Raja Saheb of Raigarh; the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer; the Chief Commissioner, Bhopal; the Rajwade Samshodhan Mandal, Dhulia; the Jain Research Institute, Yeotmal; the Dafter-i-Diwani, Hyderabad; P.E.P.S.U.; the Vidarbha Mahavidyalaya, Amraoti; the Sharadashram, Yeotmal; the Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, Simla; the Assam Provincial Museum, Gauhati; the Madhya Bharat Government; Shri K. Sajan Lal, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

### *The Research & Publication Committee—16th Meeting, Delhi, July 1950; 17th meeting, Nagpur, December 1950.*

The Research and Publication Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission held as usual two meetings during 1950. The 16th meeting was held on 31st July at Delhi under the chairmanship of Dr. Tara Chand, Educational Adviser to the Government of India

and *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee. The Committee considered a number of proposals, the more important of which relate to (i) the execution of the Five Year Publication Programme with a greater speed ; (ii) the throwing open of records to research scholars in Part 'B' States ; (iii) the establishment of Record Offices in Parts A & B States ; (iv) the further development of National Archives in respect of accommodation and equipment ; (v) the prevention of dispersal, sale and unwarranted destruction of historical documents in the possession of Zamindars, Talukdars, Nawabs, etc., consequent on the abolition of the Zamindari system ; (vi) the better preservation and utilization of historical records available in the personal custody of Indian Princes ; and (vii) the legislation ensuring safety of records in transit by railways.

The 17th meeting of the Committee was held at Nagpur on 26th December, 1950, with Dr. Tara Chand in the Chair. Some of the important recommendations of the Committee were in connection with (i) the preparation of a set of rules governing the weeding of current records in all Government agencies in India, and (ii) the award of scholarships by the Universities for the proposed compilation of the History of Freedom Movement in India.

### *The Regional Records Survey Committees.*

(a) The *Madras Regional Records Survey Committee* held two meetings during the year 1950-51, the first on 24th April, 1950 and the second on 25th November, 1950. At the first meeting the Committee resolved, in respect of the scope of its work, not to undertake activities like the collection of data for the compilation of a National Register of Records which the previous *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission had been commissioned to do. At its second meeting the Committee examined a tabular statement of the genealogical lists and other records relating to the Zamindar families in the different districts of the State furnished by the State Government. The Andhra Historical Society, Rajahmundry, at the instance of the Madras Committee is preparing a list of letters and other documents in the possession of the Kendragula family of Rajahmundry, which include correspondence with the East India Company, the Nizam, and the other country powers. The Committee has also been trying to persuade various public and private institutions and individuals to throw open their records and family papers to *bona fide* research students.

The Government of India have been assured of the co-operation of the Committee in their project for the collection of materials for the History of the Indian Freedom Movement.

(b) The *West Bengal Committee* could not undertake any extensive survey work during 1950-51 because of lack of funds. The old district records of the Collectorate of Murshidabad were inspected by a member of the Committee. The Committee examined the

Judges' Letter-Books in the Small Cause Court, originally known as the Court of Request, at Calcutta, and prepared a synopsis of the contents of the records of the Board of Trade for the years 1772-1781 and 1810-1825.

(c) The *Regional Records Survey Committee of Bihar* continued during 1951-52 the search for original documents in the different parts of the State. Dr. H. R. Ghosal, Prof. Surajdeo Narain, and Prof. Shyam Bihari Singh examined several volumes of old records in the Mazaffarpur Collectorate which contain materials for the study of administrative and economic changes during the rule of the East India Company. The Committee has also collected some old Persian *sanads* and historical manuscripts including a volume of letters of *Khan-i-Khanan.*

(d) The *Madhya Pradesh Regional Records Survey Committee* unearthed a large number of documents and manuscripts of historical interest during the year ending 31st March, 1951. The records of the Pargana Officers in Berar are of much importance, as they have been hereditary incumbents of these offices since the 16th century. The Committee arranged to inspect the papers in six Parganas, and brought to light revenue accounts of different periods, decisions of courts regarding civil and criminal disputes and correspondence of the officers. A *Kaul* or lease document issued during the regime of Malik Ambar, Minister of the Ahmadnagar State, throws light on the revenue system introduced by him. The Persian manuscripts available in the town of Talegaon Basasar in the Amraoti district, were surveyed, and arrangements have been made by the Committee to get prepared English translations of some of those which are of historical significance. A search for the documents relating to the Gond Rajas of Chanda and Nagpur, who ruled before the rise of the Bhonsla power, continued to be made during the year and some original papers were brought to light. Attempts have also been made to trace the historical documents of the three old families of Basim in Berar, *viz.*, (1) Raja Udaram, who flourished during the reign of Jahangir ; (2) Bhawani Kalu, Dewan of Bhonslas of Nagpur ; and (3) Rajaram Pant Walke, who was Diwan of the Nizam of Hyderabad. These documents in private custody are of great historical value, and arrangements have been made by the Committee for copying them. A fragmentary document recording the chronology of important events of the Bhonsla period, up to the regime of Janoji Bhonsla, has been discovered at Nagpur. The manuscript is in Modi characters, and a copy of it has been prepared.

The Madhya Pradesh Government have decided to appoint a permanent Regional Records Survey Committee from the year 1952-53; and the present *Ad Hoc* Committee will cease to function after it is set up.

(e) The Government of Uttar Pradesh have set up a permanent Regional Records Survey Committee in accordance with the recommendation of the Indian Historical Records Commission. The Committee consists of all members of the Commission residing in the State

besides five members nominated by the Government. Prof. Mohammad Habib of Muslim University, Aligarh, is the Chairman of the Committee and the Keeper of the Records of the State is its *ex-officio* Secretary. The functions of the Committee will be to conduct surveys with the object of bringing to light records in private custody and to provide for their preservation and publication. The Regional Committee has also been empowered to constitute Branch Committees with the Government's approval and allot funds to them for conducting surveys of records, securing historical materials, or similar purposes. All the records, their copies and notes, donated to and purchased by the Regional Committee or its Branches will be the property of the Government and will be preserved at the Central Record Office, Allahabad.

*State Board for Historical Records and Ancient Monuments; Bombay*

The first meeting of the State Board for Historical Records and Ancient Monuments was held at Poona on 10th July, 1950. Due to the unavoidable absence of the Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Kher, President of the Board, his address was read by the *ex-officio* Chairman, who presided over the meeting. Mr. Kher gave a brief account of the archival activities of the State Government, and pointed out the responsibility which would devolve on them with the inclusion of Archaeology in the list of concurrent subjects in the new Republican Constitution of India. In regard to the private archives in the State, he said that it would be "an important task of the Board to see that these valuable records are secured, carefully preserved and made available to the general students and the research scholars." In conclusion, Mr. Kher appealed for public co-operation and help to supplement the efforts of the Government in the preservation of the glorious heritage of records and archaeological monuments.

The Board considered various proposals for the effective and speedy implementation of its objectives regarding the survey of archives and monuments in the State, and resolved to set up four Regional Committees for Gujarat, Bombay, Maharashtra and Karnatak. These Regional Committees will consist of members of the State Board of the four regions and the Director of Archives, Government of Bombay, and will have power to co-opt local scholars.

The Board also decided to set up a Standing Committee for carrying on its day-to-day work and to deal with urgent problems. The Committee consists of the Education Secretary to the Government, the Director of Archives, Prof. D. V. Potdar and Mr. H. D. Sankalia as members, and the Historical Archivist to the Government as its Secretary.

It was also resolved that the Regional Committees set up by the Board should take up the preparation of a comprehensive list of antiquities of historical interest in the State of Bombay, with the cooperation of school teachers and other agencies for the collection of

preliminary data. The problem of conservation of the ancient monuments in the State which were not looked after by the Central Archaeological Department received special attention of the Board, and it was decided to set up a Sub-Committee to suggest suitable amendments to the existing legislation for ensuring their proper care. The Committee was requested to consider how municipalities and other local bodies could co-operate in the work of conservation of old monuments.

Finally, the Board resolved that a survey should be made of historical and literary materials lying uncared for in the possession of private families, and that copies of manuscripts of historical interest to the State should be acquired from Goa, Portugal, Holland and other foreign countries.

### *Tanjore Raj Records*

The Government of India have decided to hand over to the Government of Madras the archival collection known as Tanjore Raj Records, at present housed in the Tanjore Palace Building. This decision was based on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts, appointed in July, 1950, to advise the Government regarding the location, preservation and utilization of the records. The Committee consisted of (1) Professor D. V. Potdar of Poona ; (2) Principal C. S. Srinivasachari of Conjeevaram ; (3) Dr. P. M. Joshi, Director of Archives, Bombay ; and (4) Dr. Purnendu Basu, Secretary, Indian Historical Records Commission, New Delhi.

The Tanjore Raj Records originally belonged to the British Agency established at Tanjore after the cession of the territory to the British by the Raja of Tanjore in October, 1799. With the Agency archives are also mixed up a number of records pertaining to the old Maratha administration of the territory. As records of a defunct political agency, though they belong to the Government of India, they have remained so far in the custody of the Government of Madras, and in direct charge of the Collector of Tanjore. As the ruler of Tanjor was merely a pensioner after 1799, and the actual administration was carried on by the Resident or Agent, the Agency records of Tanjore are the administrative records of the Tanjore Raj. The Committee, which inspected the records at Tanjore on 14th November, 1950, was of the opinion that those archives should be given to the Madras Government as the administration of the areas had come under the jurisdiction of the State.

According to the reports prepared by Major N. B. Gadre in August, 1950, the Tanjore Raj Records consist of more than 1050 bundles besides some loose papers. There are also among them 18 bundles of Cadjan leaf documents and some bound volumes and books. The records are in a disorganized form, and before they can be used they have to be sorted very carefully. Major Gadre is of opinion that the documents are of great administrative value as well as of

academic interest. A large number of the manuscripts are in Modi script; several of them being in Tamil and English.

The physical condition of the Tanjore Records is deplorable. A majority of them are in such a dilapidated state that they cannot even stand the slightest handling. The oldest among them have already fallen into pieces and are kept at the Agency Record Room in a crate. It will be impossible to renovate such records.

The Government of Madras have agreed to accept the Central Government's offer to transfer them permanently to the State Government, and the Tanjore Raj Records will be brought to the Madras Record Office as soon as space is available there for their housing. It is expected that arrangements for their weeding, proper preservation, and inventorying will also be soon made by the State Government.

### *Jina Bhadra Jñāna Bhandar, Jaisalmer*

An exhibition of an unique collection of palm-leaf manuscripts belonging to the Jina Bhadra Jñāna Bhandar Library was held at the National Museum, New Delhi, on 26-27 February, 1951. The Library was established in the 15th century as a part of a Jain temple at Jaisalmer, and is believed to be the oldest repository of Jain manuscripts in India containing manuscripts of the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. The entire collection of the Library comprises 402 manuscripts on palm-leaf and more than 1,000 paper manuscripts. A selected number of the palm-leaf manuscripts was brought to New Delhi early this year for their photographic reproduction and for their rehabilitation so that they could be preserved for posterity.

Besides Jain religious texts the Bhandar possesses a large number of manuscripts relating to Indian philosophy, literature, lexicons and grammars. A commentary on the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya written in or about the 14th century has also been found in the Bhandar, and when properly edited is likely to throw fresh light on the continuity of the textual tradition of the *Arthasastra* in India. Among the exhibits were a Sanskrit manuscript of *Nyāya-Praveśa* of the famous Buddhist philosopher Dinnaga, copied in 1146 A.D. and the *Tattvasaṁgraha* of Kāmalaśila, Principal of the Nalanda University, with his own commentary, copied in the 12th century. These are Buddhist Sanskrit texts on philosophy which are very rarely found in India.

There were some other manuscripts to be seen for the first time, *e.g.*, two new commentaries on *Sankhya-Saptati* and a Bhashya on the *Ogha-Niryukti.* The author's copy of a commentary by Kanaka Vijaya on Hemachandra's Grammar, dated 1214 A.D. was also on display. The exhibits included some manuscripts, the dates of which coincide with the dates of their first composition and they belong to the early part of the 12th century. The manuscript of *Niśhītha-Sūtra* (12th century A.D.) was the personal copy of the famous Jain pontif Sri Jina Datta Suri.

The longest palm-leaf manuscript in the exhibition was of 34 inches written in well preserved black ink. The collection also included the oldest paper manuscript so far known in India *viz.*, a manuscript of the *Karmagrantha tippana* dated 1189 A.D.

## INTERNATIONAL

### *The United Nations Library*

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation has made a gift to the United Nations of its Woodrow Wilson Memorial Library, comprising about 16,500 volumes including a complete collection of the League of Nations documents. It will continue to be housed temporarily in the Woodrow Wilson Foundation building in New York City, where it will be available for public use on the responsibility of the United Nations Library. As soon as the new premises of the United Nations are ready the Memorial Library will be allotted accommodation there.

### *The International Federation for Documentation*

The Council of the International Federation for Documentation has decided that it will in future issue two periodicals instead of one. The *Review of Documentation* will be entirely devoted to scientific articles, bibliography and documentation; the new monthly organ *FID Informations* will contain information on administration and news items. The *Review of Documentation,* to be published quarterly, will contain reports presented at conferences organized by the Federation so that participants may study them in advance. Subscribers to the *Review* will also regularly receive *FID Informations.* Mons. G. Lorphèvre, Secretary General of the Association belge de Documentation, has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of the two periodicals.

The Federation has published, on behalf of UNESCO, *Directory of Microfilming and Photocopying Services.* The work forms a primary guide for those who desire to obtain microfilms or photocopies from foreign countries. It contains a list of addresses of photoduplication services available in different countries with their rates for the work. An introductory chapter gives a short survey of modern processes of documentary reproduction.

The International Federation for Documentation is to hold its next World Conference on Documentation in Rome. The Conference is being organized by the Italian Committee of FID under the auspices of the Italian Research Council. The principal object of the Conference will be to gather, by exchange of ideas, as much information as possible on a limited number of subjects with a view to reaching international agreements of practical value to documentalists, librarians, and information officers in all countries.

The programme is to include discussions of the following subjects:

(1) General classification.
(2) Application of the universal decimal classification, particularly to industrial firms and administrations.
(3) Abstracts and bibliographies, utilization of abstracting and indexing services.
(4) Application of technical methods of documentation. Selection of documents, photocopy, microcopy. Economic and financial problems raised by these methods.
(5) Teaching of documentation.
(6) Publication of dissertations and summaries with an indication of the method to be used to obtain the complete text by economic means of reproduction.
(7) Relations with other international institutions.

It is proposed to organize an exhibition of modern documentary reproduction equipment, showing progress in that field.

### *The Archives of the German Legation in Ethiopia*

The long drawn out controversy between the Imperial Ethiopian Government on the one hand, and United Kingdom, United States and France on the other, over the problem of custody of the archives of ex-enemy German Legation was settled some months ago. It was conceded by the three Western powers that the property belonged to the Imperial Ethiopian Government, but the documents should remain in possession of one of them. The negotiations lasted for over five years. The settlement arrived at was that the material portion of the archives and property should be taken by the Imperial Ethiopian Government, while the records should be kept under the control and supervision of the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, and that the archives should be open for inspection to both the parties. Since the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps happened to be the Ambassador for the United Kingdom in Ethiopia, the archives were transferred to the British Embassy in November 1950. The decision has established yet another international precedent in favour of the doctrine, so zealously advocated by archivists, of keeping intact the integrity of archives.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### *The British Records Association—18th Annual Meeting*

The 18th Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting of the British Records Association was held in December 1950 in the Cutler's Hall, London. Of the former sections of the Association only one—the Record Preservation Section—now remains as a separate

entity, but the meetings and discussions were conducted in accordance with the pattern set in previous years.

The subject for discussion at the *Technical Discussion Meeting* was "Material for Repair and Packing". Mr. R. H. Ellis of the Public Record Office, while introducing the subject, said that the most serious problem to be faced by archivists in post-war years was the supply of repair materials in adequate quantity and of good quality. It was not easy, Mr. Ellis pointed out, to find materials of pre-war quality, and careful testing and experiment were essential before new materials were brought into use. He suggested that initial experiments with such materials could profitably and harmlessly be carried out on documents scheduled for destruction. Mr. W. H. Langwell, lately Research Chemist to the Distiller's Company, emphasised the need for more technical development and research with the object of finding out which of the materials would be suitable for repair work undertaken by the archivist. One of the problems touched upon by Mr. Langwell in this connection was the suitability of modern plastics as repair materials. Dr. V. E. Yarsley, Consulting Chemist, agreed with Mr. Langwell that plastics as a family suffered under the handicap of lack of adequate testing under actual condition of service. He maintained that although cellulose acetate film and sheet appeared to have been the most favoured plastic in the preservation of documents in America, it should be remembered that this was rather the first word than the last which plastics had to offer. He referred in this connexion to plastics like polythene, vinyl polymers and co-polymers and certain members of the nylon family.

The next speaker, Mr. L. W. Causer, described tests carried out by the Stationery Office Laboratory which was finally responsible for the quality of materials which Government Departments would use for the making of public records. Mr. Causer suggested to those who needed to test their repair materials to seek the advice of the Public Record Office or the British Museum or to consult the laboratories of PATRA (Printing and Allied Trades Research Association) at Leatherhead. Mr. A. F. Cirket of Bedfordshire County Record Office spoke on the pioneering work in document repair begun by the late Dr. G. H. Fowler at the Bedfordshire County Record Office some thirty years ago.

Towards the end of the meeting Major F. G. C. Rowe, Honorary Secretary of the Society of Local Archivists, made a brief announcement about the Document Repair Course which had been organised by the London County Council in collaboration with the Society and the Public Record Office at the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts.

At the meeting of the *Record Preservation Section* the discussion on the "Transfer of Archives from Solicitors' and Surveyors' Offices to Local Repositories" was opened by Mr. Guy Cholmeley, lately a partner in Messrs Frere Cholmeley & Co., Solicitors of Lincoln's Inn Fields. Mr. Cholmeley described some of the perils menacing Solicitors' accu-

mulations of documents, from theft, water and fire to "confusion". He stressed the necessity of immediate steps being taken by the British Records Association for the preservation of these collections of documents by examining them and securing their deposit in suitable repositories.

Lt. Col. W. LeHardy participating in the discussion invited the attention of the Section to the problem of Bankers' Records, particularly because bankers had no legal authority to hand them over for deposit. Several of the speakers spoke about the ways in which solicitors and others having accumulations of private records should be approached. The consensus of opinion was that there was need for personal approach and this method was widely applied with success. Lt. Col. G. Malet felt that the idea of sorting and deposit was gradually getting round to the Solicitors, but that it was still most important to emphasise on them that it was in their interest to sort and deposit their accumulations. Sir Hilary Jenkinson, the Chairman, hinted at the possibility of legislation regarding these matters.

The meeting of the *Publications Section* was presided over by Prof. T. F. T. Plucknett. Mr. F. G. Emmison read a paper on the "Lists, Indexes and Inventories". He lamented the absence of any published Guides or general Inventories of most of the Local Record Offices in the United Kingdom. He was of opinion that to meet the immediate needs of students brief Guides should be published in preference to catalogues or calendars the preparation of which takes a long time. He also suggested that in the counties where there were more than one independent series of important archives, joint publications could be undertaken by issuing a brief composite Inventory. Several members taking part in the discussion pointed out the difficulties the Local Record Offices had to face in publishing Inventories or Guides and made enquiries regarding the technique of their preparation.

The subject for the *Discussion Meeting* of the Association was "University and College Archives". Dr. J. A. Venn, President of Queen's College and University Archivist of Cambridge opened the discussion. He spoke of a certain rivalry between the Cambridge and Oxford Universities concerning their relative antiquity, but while Oxford had an archivist for the care of archives for some centuries, Cambridge appointed one for the first time in October 1949 only. The archives in both cases had passed through great vicissitudes of fortune and much had been lost, but whatever remained were of great interest and value. Dr. Venn touched on the subject of College Archives also and emphasised their value as biographical materials.

Mr. I. G. Philip, speaking next, explained that the University Archives at Oxford had always maintained an existence separate from the University Library, and their first Keeper was appointed as early as 1634. He, however, pointed out that University Archives gave little information about the intellectual life and activities of the University. Miss Hill spoke on the archives of the University of

Glasgow. On the invitation of the Chairman, Sir Hilary Jenkinson, several representatives of smaller and younger universities gave accounts of their archives.

The Annual General Meeting was presided over by the Master of the Rolls. In presenting the Annual Report, he reviewed the activities of the Association during the past year. An important contribution, he said, had been made by the *Memorandum on School Records* which might well be the means of saving much from ignorant destruction. Another outstanding service performed by the Association was the guidance given regarding the publication of Records and particularly of Business Records. The long-awaited *Handlist of Records Publications* should prove a welcome aid to editors. The Master of the Rolls emphasized the need for great vigilance in saving records from danger of loss, dispersal and destruction. He was of the opinion that these perils could not be overcome unless preservation of archives was put on proper footing throughout the country. He also spoke about the progress made by the Committee on Archives set up by him.

### *The John Rylands Library, Manchester—Acquisition of Manuscripts of Indian interest*

Among the historical manuscripts acquired by John Rylands Library, Manchester in 1950 are the muniments of the Bagshawe family of Ford Hall Co. Derby, of 15-19th centuries. These include an important item of Indian interest, *viz.*, the correspondence and papers of Col. Samuel Bagshawe (d. 1762), who was for some years second in command in the East Indies (1754-1756). The Bagshawe Papers comprise two large folio volumes in which are collected his correspondence, military papers, regimental orders, etc., for the years 1754-1758 (279 items), and two letters from Clive to Bagshawe (dated 29 November 1760 and 24 February 1762), and one (a copy) from Bagshawe to Clive (dated 8 September 1754). The National Archives of India will be shortly acquiring copies of these manuscripts.

### *Institute of Historical Research, London—Victoria History of the Counties of England*

Mr. Ralph Bernard Pugh, formerly an Assistant Keeper at the Public Record Office, became Editor of the *Victoria County History* in November 1949, in succession to Mr. L. F. Salzman who retired after an association with the project lasting more than 45 years.

The *Victoria County History* was started fifty years ago as a private venture by Mr. H. A. Doubleday and Sir Laurence Gomme and continued so under the editorship of Dr. William Page until it was transferred to the University of London in 1932. The Office of the *History* Committee which supervises the working of the plan is located at the Institute of Historical Research. The *History* was planned to cover

all the counties of England and there are 42 'counties' to be described. Of these, histories of Bedford, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Rutland, Surrey, Worcester and the North Riding have been completed and that of Warwick is nearly finished. According to the arrangements which have been made by the *Victoria County History* Committee the histories of Leicester, Oxford, Stafford and Wilts will be written during the next decade. For most of the other counties volumes on general history have also been prepared but the major part of the work on topographical volumes which would include the description of every parish in the kingdom remains to be done.

The funds for the compilation of *Victoria County History* have mostly been raised locally, but in the old days handsome donations were given by the nobility and gentry. On account of the recent economic changes the landowners cannot be so generous in patronizing such projects as they were before, but fortunately the local authorities are coming forward to give monetary help for the completion of the work. *Victoria County History* local committees have been formed in various counties and sub-editors have been employed who work under the general direction of the Editor. If the materials collected by them are of the proper quality the University of London undertakes to publish them. Thus the cost of publication is borne by the University and the local committees pay for the compilation of the *History*.

### *Centenary of the Public Libraries Act (1850)*

The Centenary of the passing of the first Public Libraries Act (1850) of Great Britain was commemorated last year. The occasion aroused world-wide interest, and the celebrations were arranged in many countries by the British Council. Exhibitions of books were arranged in all the parts of Great Britain as a part of the celebration programme. In London Lord Samuel opened on 5th September, the Exhibition entitled "40 Million Books". This Exhibition was arranged at the National Book League, and was organized by that body in collaboration with the Association of Metropolitan Chief Libraries and the London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association. It was a simple show designed to express many aspects of the public library service.

It was on 14th August, 1850 that Public Libraries Act received Royal Assent. A year earlier a Select Committee had found that England was one of the countries worst provided with library facilities. Though the provisions of this Act were of an adoptive character, the local authorities began to take interest in the growth of public libraries; and the present nationwide library coverage in Great Britain is an achievement unequalled in another country. The most outstanding feature of the British public library service is that every inhabitant of Great Britain lives within the area of a library authority and enjoys free access to a public library service. At

least one in four people of the country is a regular registered borrower from a public library. This simple fact accounts for the deep influence the public library service is exercising on every phase of the national life of the English people.

### *The Library Association—The Archive Committee Memorandum*

The keen interest taken by the Council of the Library Association in the future administration of local archives in England is reflected in a memorandum approved at a meeting of the Council held on 6th October, 1950. The memorandum was drawn up on the basis of reports received from the Council's Archive Committee which had made a detailed examination of the problems arising from uncoordinated multiplication of repositories meant to serve the same locality. The accordance of official recognition to more than one repository in the same locality has, in the opinion of the Council, obstructed the building up of single comprehensive collections of private, semi-public, business or other archives belonging to the same region, and may lead to the following unhappy results:

1. Separation of archives which should be kept together;
2. Increasing difficulties for students to locate;
3. Separation of documents from maps and books necessary for research; and
4. Unhealthy competition between the repositories for acquiring the same document or series of documents.

The Council is not opposed to the creation of further repositories for local archives where necessary, but is, at the same time, of opinion that where there is more than one repository in the same locality, the delimitation of field of interest will go a long way to remove the evil effects pointed out by it. It believes that where a conflict of interests occurs, it should be possible for one of the interested repositories to bring the matter to the notice of a central authority, in order to ask for intervention, should this be considered desirable. Having considered all these problems, the Council has recommended to the Master of the Rolls and the Master of the Rolls Archives Committee that a co-ordinated plan for the administration of archives should be formulated at an early date, that recognition should be withheld from any repository not prepared to carry out its full obligations, that the minimum requirements of a recognised repository should be specified, and that a committee should be appointed to consider, among other things, questions relating to the intake of records into existing and future repositories.

The Annual Conference of the Association in 1950 was a special one to commemorate the centenary of the first Public Libraries Act (1850). It was held in London from 18th to 22nd September. The Presidential address was delivered by Vice-Admiral the Earl Mount-

batten of Burma on behalf of the H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, President of the Council for the year. Lord Mountbatten spoke about the growth of the Public Library movements in Great Britain, and eulogized the services rendered by the Library Association in this field.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### *The National Archives and Records Service*

The Federal Records Act of 1950 which became law on 5th September is another important step taken by the Government of the United States to organize records services of the Federal Government on a sound basis. The Act has made it compulsory for the Government agencies to make adequate records of their activities and to undertake records management programmes. The General Services Administration has been vested with the responsibility for improving standards, procedures, and techniques in these fields, and for operating Federal records centres where non-current records are to be maintained, until a final decision is taken regarding their disposal or permanent retention. Such centres have been established in New York City, Alexandra, Va., Chicago, and San Francisco. They are working under the supervision of the Records Management Division of the National Archives and Records Service.

According to a provision of the Act the National Archives has been authorized to receive for deposit personal papers and other documentary materials of the Presidents and of other high Federal officials. This is a significant departure from the acquisition policy followed so far by the National Archives in not accepting deposits of private papers.

The new Federal Records Act has reconstituted and expanded the functions of the National Historical Publications Commission. It now consists of the Archivist of the United States as Chairman; the Librarian of Congress or his alternate; one member each from the Senate and the House of Representatives; one nominee of the Chief Justice of the United States; one member each representing the Departments of State and Defence; two members of the American Historical Association; and two other members to be appointed by the President of the United States.

The functions of the Commission as now defined are "to make plans, estimates, and recommendations for such historical works and collections of sources as it deems appropriate for printing or otherwise recording at the public expenses"; and to "cooperate with and encourage appropriate Federal, State and local agencies and non-governmental institutions, societies, and individuals in collecting and preserving, and when it deems such action desirable, in editing and publishing the papers of outstanding citizens of the United States and such other documents as may be important for an understanding and

appreciation of the history of the United States". The reconstituted Commission held its first meeting in February to consider a historical publication programme for the country and has prepared a preliminary report.

Among the recent accessions to the National Archives are Journals of hydrographic observations kept by members of the North Pacific Exploring Expedition under Commanders Cadwalader Ringgold and John Rodgers, 1853-56, with related sketches and notes, transferred by the Navy Department. The other significant accruals are additional manuscript maps and drawings of old Army posts and installations, 1800-1900, and maps compiled by the Office of Strategic Services and its predecessor, the Office of the Coordinator of Information, showing terrain, transportation and economic conditions in the U.S.S.R. and Asia, 1940-45.

The National Archives has recently published a comprehensive guide entitled *Federal Records of World War II* in two volumes. The first volume deals with records of civilian agencies, and the second contains descriptions of those of the military agencies. A new edition of *Your Government's Records in the National Archives,* first issued in 1945, has also been recently published. This work is a brief guide to all the records in the National Archives. A new *List of File Microcopies of the National Archives* has also been issued. All issues of the *Federal Register* (1936-49) have been microfilmed and positive prints can be purchased from the National Archives.

The manuscript collection of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library has been enriched by the accession of the papers of Elbert D. Thomas, recently appointed High Commissioner of the Trust Islands. The Library has also received the papers of Harbert C. Pell of Pellbridge (New York)—who was at one time Minister to Hungary and Portugal and a member of the War Crimes Commission. These papers covering the period 1930-48 along with other documents contain Mr. Pell's correspondence with Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### *The Society of American Archivists—14th Annual Meeting*

The Society of American Archivists met at Madison (Wisconsin) for its 14th Annual Meeting on 9th-10th October, 1950. In the course of his presidential address Dr. Philip C. Brooks observed that there was a difference between the broad concept of an archivist as used in defining the membership of the Society and the precise view that is used in civil service rules. He said, "One is a matter of interest, the other of occupation. We all have a concern for the preservation and effective use of valuable evidence of human activity in the form of records; we should focus on that common denomination." Dr. Brooks further pointed out that these two concepts were not in conflict. He also emphasised that archivists were not merely custo-

dians of non-current records, but they had interest in their creation, current handling and selection for permanent retention. These aspects of the archivist's job had been given full recognition, and there had been marked development in recent years of Records Management Programmes. Furthermore, Dr. Brooks considered selection of records of permanent interest as one of the basic archival functions of the archivists along with their responsibility for preservation, description, and reference servicing of the records worth retaining.

On the first day of the meeting Dr. Oliver W. Holmes of the National Archives read a very illuminating paper on "Areas of Co-operation between the National Archives and State Archives". He laid special emphasis on (1) co-operation in making the archivist's profession and its services more widely and favourably known, and (2) co-operation in raising its standard. He believed that co-operation in advancing the status and standard of the archival profession was of basic importance, and suggested that the Federal Government and the States should collaborate in producing a manual of practice for American archivists.

William D. McCain of the Mississipi State Department of Archives and History, presented the point of view of State archivists on this subject. He felt that the National Archives should provide the leadership to the State Archives, and should serve as the clearing house to which the State Archivists could go for technical advice and information. Mr. McCain also pointed out that large bodies of Federal Records were scattered in several places in the States, and also that there were many States which had not made adequate provision for the custody and care of their records. He, therefore, suggested that those two problems could be satisfactorily solved by co-operative effort by the establishment of combined 'Federal-State' depositories, which could house both Federal and State records.

The subject of business records and their preservation found an important place in the discussions of the Society. Mr. Reynold M. Wik in his paper on "Adventure in Business Records", described his experiences about the state of original records of Companies manufacturing power machinery for farms. He pointed out the scarcity of materials on the subject in local, state or national depositories as until recent years there was little appreciation of the business records either by historians or keepers of historical manuscripts. At the present time, according to Mr. Wik, most of the records of the agricultural machinery firms have been preserved by accident rather than by any well thought-out plan for their preservation. Since most of the manufacturing companies do not employ archivists, the mishandling of records by men with little interest in history is causing constant destruction of the valuable materials. Mr. Wik in conclusion emphasized the need for co-operative effort to save the materials for the documentation of an important phase of the development of the United States, namely the utilization of power in American

agriculture. The paper read by Robert Polk Thomson on the "Business Records Survey in Wisconsin" gave a more encouraging picture of the business records in a State which fifty years ago was considered to be an agricultural State. The survey carried out by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in 1949-50 with the object of facilitating the study of business history revealed that the firms as a rule felt deep concern over the problems of business records, and that a number of them kept their records and were interested in their history. Out of the 400 manufacturing concerns to whom a set of questionnaires was circulated by the Society asking for information, 46 per cent. returned replies, and over 225 firms offered to open their records to qualified researchers. The response from the manufacturers has encouraged the Society to extend the survey to non-manufacturing groups.

On the second day of the Annual Meeting, Dr. Wayne C. Grover, Archivist of the United States, spoke on "Recent Developments in Federal Archival Activities", and explained the significance of the publication in January 1949 of Hoover Commission recommendations on Records Management, the transfer of the National Archives Establishment to the new General Services Administration in July 1949, the passage of the Federal Records Act of 1950, the establishment of a Federal Records Management staff, separate from the staff of the National Archives, and finally, the establishment of a system of Federal Records Centres in various parts of the United States. In Dr. Grover's opinion the National Archives has immensely gained in resources, facilities, authority and prestige in the field of Federal records management by its association with General Services Administration. He also felt that the National Archives in future would have less of administrative work and less of immediate accessioning of records, and would be able to devote its resources to preserving and assuring the usability of valuable archives collected during the past fifteen years. Another advantage which in his opinion would accrue to the National Archives was that its staff would be relieved of the burden of solving all record-problems of the Government with the establishment of the Records Management Division within the frame-work of the new organization, and the passing of the Federal Record Act of 1950 requiring all agencies to undertake a records management programme.

### *The Library of Congress; Washington, D.C.*

The Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress has been presented with the papers of Major General Frank Ross McCoy by General McCoy. They cover his long and distinguished career from the time he served in the Philippines shortly after the turn of the century until his retirement late in 1949. The papers furnish a wealth of material not only to biographers but also to historians concerned

with military history of the 20th century, and with those problems of international scope in the solution of which General McCoy played a telling part. Additional papers of Major General Hugh L. Scott, a prominent authority on Indian affairs and Chief of Staff during a large part of World War I, have been presented to the Library by his son, Major Lewis M. Scott. These papers constitute an important addition to the Library's holdings on military affairs from the late 19th century through World War I, and on the administration of Indian affairs during that period.

A group of personal and semi-official papers of Fritz Wiedemann, one time Company Commander in the infantry regiment in which Adolph Hitler served as Corporal, and later Hitler's personal Adjutant, consists mainly of correspondence with Nazi officials and sympathizers and with German organizations from 1938 to 1941, when Wiedemann was German Consul-General at San Francisco, and when he directed German espionage in the western hemisphere.

Mrs. Sergei Rachmaninoff, widow of the late composer, pianist and conductor, has presented to the Library of Congress the large collection of autograph music manuscripts, letters, and other memorabilia. This collection reflects the career of the distinguished musician, who died in 1943.

The largest group of material of literary interest to become available to qualified readers in the Manuscripts Division in recent months is composed of the papers of Lewis Chase, Professor of Literature for over forty years, which were presented to the Library by Mrs. Chase, herself a well-known writer and lecturer.

The Library has also recently received the gift of *Carpenter Collection* of geographical photographs, assembled over a period of fifty years by the late Frank G. Carpenter and his daughter Mrs. W. Chapin Huntington. The collection includes many rare pictures of historical value, including a comprehensive treatment of the Far Eastern, African, Alaskan and French Basque areas.

The outstanding achievement in the Library's microfilming programme was the successful completion in July 1950 of the photoduplication of the manuscript collection in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai. The photographic work was performed for the Library by the American Foundation for the Study of Man., Inc. Of approximately 3,300 manuscripts in the monastery, 1,675 were filmed in addition to 1,737 *firmans* and 116 miniatures. Most of the manuscripts are the works of the monks of the monastery and are written in Greek, Arabic, Slavonian, Iberian and Syriac. These literary treasures have been accumulated during the last sixteen centuries by one of the most ancient establishments of its kind in the world.

Of almost equal importance to scholars is the microfilming project undertaken in Jerusalem by the Library in association with the American Schools of Oriental Research. On the completion of the filming work at Mount Sinai, operations were resumed at the Patriarchate Library in Jerusalem in August 1950 under the direction of

Dr. Kenneth W. Clark of the Library of Congress. More than a thousand manuscripts are scheduled to be microfilmed under this scheme. The emphasis of the project is laid on the copying of about 180 ancient codices in the Patriarchal Library needed in connection with the preparation of the new critical apparatus for the Greek New Testament. The Library contains approximately three thousand ancient and medieval manuscripts, the oldest dating from the seventh century.

The Library has completed the microfilm publication of the earlier legislative, judicial and executive records of the forty-eight States and their territorial and colonial predecessors. The work has been spread over nine years, and has involved the reproduction of about 2,500,000 pages on 1,700 rolls of microfilm of about 100 feet each in length. A 800 page guide to the contents of the microfilms has also been published.

Dr. Solon J. Buck, Chief of the Manuscripts Division, has been transferred to the post of Assistant Librarian of the Congress. He will also serve as Consultant on Manuscripts. David C. Mearns becomes Chief of the Division of Manuscripts.

## FRANCE

### *Archives Nationales, Paris—Stage Technique d'Archives*

The "Stage Technique d'Archives" or the technical course on archives was started in 1950 at the Archives Nationales, Paris, in coöperation with the Ecole des Chartes. The course is primarily designed to impart practical training in Archive Administration to graduates of the Ecole des Chartes to complete their traditional studies, and to make them fit for performing their varied duties in modern archival establishments. From the academic year 1951-52 the course will be open to a limited number of foreign archivists and students having requisite qualifications, so that they might partake of the long experience of the French in archives-keeping.

The course for the foreign students will almost cover one academic year and will constitute an all round preparation for the functions of an archivist. The present programme in this course consists of the common cycle (beginning from the end of January to the middle of each year) for the students of the Ecole des Chartes and to foreign archivists and students. From October 1951; a special session for foreign students will be added to this cycle which will comprise (1) instruction in the theory of organization and history of archives to be given at the Archives Nationales, Paris, from 15th October to the opening of the common cycle (end of January of the following year); and (2) a complementary course organized at departmental archives for a period of approximately three months, from Easter to the end of June or the beginning of July. Besides the study of organization of official archives

at different levels, students will have lectures on private and economic archives and will be offered opportunities to visit their repositories.

## BELGIUM

*Archives Générales du Royaume—Restoration of Documents*

Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, has recently acquired a Barrow's Laminator for the mechanical restoration of paper documents. In Europe, Belgium is the first country to make a departure from the old methods of rehabilitation of records. Before the last war Archives Générales du Royaume had made an experiment in using cellulose acetate for repair of documents by pasting two sheets of this material with a special liquid adhesive. Since then rapid strides have been made in the development of the lamination process in the United States. The most notable is invention of a hydraulic press by which the cellulose acetate sheets are applied to paper with heat and pressure. Mr. William J. Barrow, Documents Restorer, Virginia State Library, Richmond, perfected the invention of a machine which is less expensive than the hydraulic presses used at the National Archives, Washington, and the Library of Congress and gives equally good results. From the experience gained at the Belgian Archives, it is felt by the local archival authorities that the documents laminated by Barrow's machine are better than those treated with the hydraulic press as the flat press sometimes leaves pockets of air which are eliminated by pressure of rollers in the Barrow's Laminator.

## ITALY

*Christopher Columbus International Exhibition, Genoa*

An exhibition to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Columbus opened in Genoa on 12th October, 1950, and continued for a full year. Ministries and officials of the Italian Government and many other Italian and foreign patrons participated in organizing the exhibition; and archives, libraries and museums in Europe and America lent valuable exhibits. Four halls in the San Giorgio Palace, the venue of the exhibition, were devoted to the pre-Columbian civilization of the New World, to the life and times of Columbus and to the documents and studies on the great discoverer. Among the Genoese exhibits were the two original notarial records from the Archivio di Stato generally accepted as proof of Columbus's birth in Genoa between 25th August and 31st October, 1451. There were also on display a large number of rare maps and atlases of pre-Columbian as well as post-Columbian periods. From the Laurentine Library in Florence, there was an annonymous Genoese Marine Atlas of 1351 and from the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, was the coloured world map of Fra Mauro on vellum, dated not later than 1459, show-

ing the results of some of Marco Polo's explorations. The British Museum lent the Contarini-Roseli world map of 1506, the earliest known printed map constructed from data originating with Columbus.

About forty pieces from Spain were among the most interesting exhibits. Among them were included Columbus's original autograph sketch of the Coast of Northern Haiti, 1492, which is considered as Columbus's only surviving map; a dozen of Columbus's own books with marginal notes by him or his brother Bartholomew and a contemporary copy of the "passport" issued to Columbus by Ferdinand and Isabella on 17th April, 1492.

The Catalogue of the Exhibition is in itself a valuable reference book, and constitutes a useful guide to some of the important collections of Columbiana in the great libraries of the world.

### *Unione Nazionale Amici degli Archivi*

An Italian record society has been recently founded under the name of *Unione Nazionale Amici degli Archivi* with the object of promoting the care, preservation and study of records of historical value and of co-öperating in all schemes for arousing interest in and knowledge of the contents of record offices in the country. It is a non-professional association, the government archivists being precluded from ordinary membership.

The Italian archival journal, *Archivi,* has resumed its publication, and the first issue since 1943 appeared last year.

## SPAIN

### *Central Repository for Microfilms*

The Spanish Ministry of National Education issued a decree on 14th July, 1950, creating the Archivo Central de Microfilms under the jurisdiction of the Department of Archives and Libraries. This step, taken with the object of conserving Spanish national documents and of helping research scholars, provides for the systematic microfilming of documents, manuscripts and printed materials, beginning with those in the National Library and the National Archives. The decree also authorizes the reproduction of the holdings of government departments, private libraries and individuals.

# BOOK REVIEWS

*The Private Correspondence of Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras (1781-85)*, edited by C. Collin Davies, Camden Third Series—Vol. LXXVII (London, Royal Historical Society, 1950; pp. xxiv + 236).

LORD MACARTNEY had an extended diplomatic and political career and was Governor of Granada and Tobago in the West Indies before he secured the Governorship of Madras. He refused the Governor-Generalship of Bengal in 1785 and after a few years of wandering in political wilderness, he went to China as the British ambassador; and also served for a short time as Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. The decade of Warren Hasting's Governor-Generalship was marked throughout by bickerings between Bengal and Madras caused partly by the unworkable nature of the constitutional relations between the two governments and partly by personal factors and political situations that developed at the time and caused a certain amount of friction. Macartney inherited the political and military incompetence of the authorities of Madras which culminated in Haidar Ali's ravages, and from which relief was only partially obtained by help received from Bengal and the vigour displayed by Coote. But in spite of Macartney's efforts to help Coote with his limited resources, there arose a bitter misunderstanding between the two; and Macartney naturally resented the irascible general's strictures on the Madras Council for acts and lapses both of which were really beyond their control. Macartney's subsequent quarrels with General Stuart and his tactless criticism of Admiral Sir Edward Hughes's plans, thereby offending the latter's complacency, added to the complications of the situation.

With regard to the country powers the complications were even more troublesome. Madras desired to assert the Company's right to the Guntur Sarkar after the demise of Basalat Jang to whom it had been assigned as a *jaghir* for life. Warren Hastings vetoed the proposal as he was desirous of conciliating the Nizam. The Governor-General even proposed the cession of the Northern Sarkars to the Nizam; but Macartney vigorously opposed this. Madras had earlier proposed to discontinue the payment due to the Nizam for the Northern Sarkars under the treaties of 1765 and 1768, thus estranging him at a critical juncture. The arguments advanced on either side were not particularly striking. But as Dr. Davies remarks, Hastings showed a lack of sufficient foresight as his recommendation for the rendition of the region would have dismembered the Madras Presidency and weakened the English naval hold of the east coast; and it would have also been fruitless in its aim to secure a strong and reliable ally.

Further estrangement ensued between Bengal and Madras over the question of the assignment of the Carnatic revenues to the Com-

pany on account of the war and over the Nawab's calculated attempts to deal directly with Bengal over the head of Madras. Hastings had, in his anxiety to secure the support of the Arcot Interest in England, ordered Macartney to cancel the Nawab's assignment. But Macartney had refused and appealed to the Directors, in whose counsels different interests were conflicting with one another. The bitterness was intensified by the Directors' orders cancelling Hastings's agreement of April 1781, *with the* Nawab *and approving* Macartney's *treaty* of December 1781, with him and by the subsequent order of the Board of Control for the restoration of the assignment to the Nawab. This last measure led to Macartney's resignation in 1785. There was also a further factor of disagreement due to the differences as to the policy to be adopted towards the helpless ruler of Tanjore.

Hastings likewise did not, and could not, approve of Macartney's attempt, soon after his assumption of office, and in conjunction with Coote, Hughes and John Macpherson, to reach an understanding with the Marathas. His similar overtures to Haidar Ali and later to Tipu Sultan, when the latter's military position had actually deteriorated and his negotiating the terms of the Treaty of Mangalore, ignoring those of the Treaty of Salbai, were equally, if not more grievously, annoying than his earlier actions; and they were not only in excess of his legal authority, but provocative of troubles with the country powers like the Nawab of the Carnatic and Mahadaji Sindia.

Macartney's despatch of extracts from Hastings's letter on Tanjore (of July 1781) to the Directors, in order to strengthen his own stand towards that kingdom, was held by the Governor-General to be the prime cause of his own censure by the Court on his Tanjore proposals. The letters edited here show, however, that Macartney was innocent of any design on Hastings and that the 'Villain of the piece' was really John Macpherson. It is justifiable, as has been well pointed out, to infer that Macartney, like Philip Francis, went to India with the intention of securing the Governor-Generalship.

Macartney, like Cornwallis in Bengal, was the first Governor of Madras to be chosen from outside the ranks of the Company's servants; and he had consequently to face opposition from vested interests of jobbery and corruption from which he was entirely free.

The extracts from Macartney's private correspondence given in this volume throw some fresh light on these acrimonious disputes between the Madras and Bengal Governments and on the characters of the principal personages who played their part, like Macartney, Hastings, Coote, J. Macpherson, Benfield, Staunton, R. J. Sulivan and others. Macartney resigned his post on the annulment of the Carnatic assignment and the appointment of John Hollond as his provisional successor; and he sailed for England in July 1785 though he had received news before he left, of his appointment as Governor-General, which he declined, because he wanted a clear definition of the Ministry's attitude towards him. The Board of Control's preference

for Macartney as Governor-General emphasised the fact that Pitt and Dundas had by that time emancipated themselves from the claims on them of the various East India interests in Parliament with which they had previously close associations.

The note of the Editor on the Macartney Correspondence on pp. xvi-xviii is very useful to the student; and the correspondence of the Governor, edited in the volume, furnishes evidence from his side as to controversies in which he was involved.

C. S. SRINIVASACHARI

*The Treaty of Bassein and the Anglo-Maratha War in the Deccan, 1802-04*, Edited by Raghubir Sinh, Poona Residency Correspondence Series, Vol. X, (Bombay. 1951, pp. xx+288; Price Rs. 12/-).

*Poona Affairs: Elphinstone's Embassy, Part I, 1811-15*, Edited by G. S. Sardesai, Poona Residency Correspondence Series, Vol. XII, (Bombay, 1950, pp. xviii+475; Price Rs. 15/-).

THE Poona Residency Records which cover the period 1786-1818 contain invaluable basic data for a proper understanding of the transitory greatness achieved by the Marathas under Mahadaji Sindhia and Nana Fadnis, and their rapid decline within two decades after their death. Ten of the volumes in the series were published by the Government of Bombay during 1936-43 and owing to the difficulties created by the war their publication was suspended for the time being. The resumption of the publication of the series and the issue of the volumes under review would be greatly welcomed by historians.

The central figure in both the volumes under review is Baji Rao II, the last of the Peshwas. Part I of Vol. X contains letters relating to the climax of the struggle which forced him to seek the protection of the Company to escape from the domination of Daulat Rao Sindhia on the one hand and Jaswant Rao Holkar on the other. The Treaty of Bassein to which he affixed his signature on the last day of December, 1802, marked the end of Maratha power and supremacy, and the firm establishment of British rule in India. Part II of the volume contains correspondence relating to the Company's war with Mahadaji Sindhia and Raghuji Bhonsle, who rose in revolt against the conclusion of the treaty. The war did little good to the Maratha chiefs and they were forced to agree to the ignominious treaties of Deogaon and Sarji Anjangaon in December, 1803. Further, the confused state of affairs in his territories and the fear of an attack by Jaswant Rao Holkar obliged Daulat Rao Sindhia also, in February, 1804, to enter into a subsidiary alliance with the Company like the Peshwa. Volume XII, the second of the books under review, gives a picture of the struggle between Baji Rao and the Company, the

former trying to break the fetters placed on him by the terms of the Treaty of Bassein and revive something of his former power as the over-lord of the Maratha Confederacy, and the latter endeavouring to reduce the Peshwa to the position of tutelage and absolute dependence on itself. The letters relate mainly to the negotiation of a settlement between the Peshwa and the Southern Jagirdars, and the mission to Poona of Gangadhar Shastri, the Gaikwad's envoy, ending with his tragic murder.

Although the main facts of the history of the Anglo-Maratha relations during this period are well known through other sources, these records are invaluable to research students for a better understanding of the causes and circumstances that led to the fall of the Maratha Confederacy and for a revaluation of the achievements of the leading personalities of the time. In the preface to volume XII, it has been observed that a careful study of the letters contained in it would bring out the sympathy of the reader for Baji Rao II who is generally considered as a degenerate ruler. The letters show that Baji Rao was an astute enough politician and he might have fared well in better times. What was required at the time to save the Marathas from utter ruin was, however, not mere diplomatic ability, but a high degree of moral ardour and intense patriotism of the type evinced by Shivaji. This he completely lacked. It is true that he resisted the British advances for the conclusion of a subsidiary alliance as long as he could, signed the preliminary terms only when Holkar's forces were poised for a fight near Poona and the beginning of hostilities only a matter of hours, and concluded the Treaty of Bassein as an exile wanting to recover his authority. Possibly any other man in his position would have done no better. But the test of greatness lies in rising above "any other man". In all his negotiations with the Maratha chiefs, before the treaty of Bassein and after, Baji Rao did not show much of the spirit of compromise, the ability to compose differences, win over enemies and unite the country against the rising power of the Company, a power which everyone with some political sense knew would soon supplant the Marathas if the chiefs continued to be divided among themselves. He was only concerned, like the other Maratha chiefs, about his petty claims to lucre and land. If he had fought bravely, if need be alone, and fallen he would have won the esteem of his contemporaries and the admiration of succeeding generations. If he had yielded without a fight, knowing the odds against him, he would have at least saved his skin and continued, like the Nizam, a protected prince. But he chose to put up a weak fight, succumbed and died a pensioner at the hands of the Company. He could by no means be considered a front rank diplomat, administrator or soldier, but he was certainly no degenerate ruler and the tendency to hold him personally responsible for much of the misfortune that befell the Marathas must be strongly deprecated.

Baji Rao II has received much more attention at the hands of historians than he deserves. The real heroes of the times were the

Residents at the Court of Poona—Close and Elphinstone—whose diplomatic ability, no less than the strength of British arms, won the Empire of India for the British. The following appreciation of Elphinstone in the introduction to Vol. XII by G. S. Sardesai, coming from a Maratha scholar of high repute, is well deserved:

"The main interest centres round the singular and uncommon personality of Elphinstone, always as ready to strike with his pen as with his sword..... All the strategem of the average Maratha and all the powers of persuasion possessed by the wily Peshwa, seemed to have been baffled before this giant antagonist. .....He spread a net of spies throughout Maharashtra and the territory of the adjoining chiefs of Kolhapur, Sawantawadi and Goa: and so alert was he with plans and measures that nothing could escape his vigilance and foresight.....At Poona he exhibited his powers of searching scrutiny during the frequent interviews he had with the Peshwa, his agents and ministers and with those of the other Maratha chiefs. Every line he wrote, every word he spoke breathed fire, determination, strength of will and faith in his own judgment and courage. That is why I consider all Elphinstone's writings specially valuable and instructive to students of history. ....It is the Resident Elphinstone who seems to be already ruling at Poona, and not the Peshwa himself. Baji Rao surely lost his kingdom through his own incompetency, which became all the more glaring in the presence of such a supreme master."

The letters, it may be added, are of particular interest to students of the constitutional history of India as they throw a flood of light on the origin and growth of the system of subsidiary alliance. There is enough evidence to show that neither the Company nor the country powers, as is often alleged, grossly undervalued the significance of this development to the future of India. Whatever the hopes and anticipations of the Nizam might have been when he entered into the alliance, the Peshwa and the Maratha chiefs were extremely wary and suspicious of the advances made by the Company. The timidity and irresoluteness of which Baji Rao is often accused in these letters merely indicate the impatience of the Company's Resident at his refusal to walk into the net spread out for him quickly. Right from the beginning, subsidiary alliance was an alliance between unequals, understood as such by the country powers and accepted either as a temporary expedient to get over a political or military crisis as was the case with the Peshwa and the Sindhia or as something inevitable and welcome to save the State from worse enemies as was the case with the Nizam and the Gaikwad.

In conclusion, while welcoming the issue of the above volumes of the Poona Residency Records Series, it is earnestly hoped that volumes XIII and XIV would also soon be issued and the Series completed.

S. V. Desika Char

*Anglo-Assamese Relations, 1771-1826* by S. K. Bhuyan (Gauhati, Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in Assam, 1949; pp. xvii + 639; Price Rs. 25).

HAVING worked for a considerable number of years in the field of historical research in Assam, it has been possible for the author to handle scientifically all available sources, indigenous and foreign, and to present a well-documentated and readable account of the relations of the East India Company with Assam from 1771 to 1826. The work bears the impress of a man of wide experience and deep learning.

Dr. Bhuyan deals with two aspects of the history of Assam—its commercial relations with the East India Company and the political history of the State from the last quarter of the eighteenth to the first quarter of the nineteeth century. He has thrown a flood of light on the main features of the commercial policy of the East India Company and the part played by the pioneers such as Hugh Baillie, David Killican, William Dow and Daniel Raush. Of these by far the most important was Hugh Baillie. "In fact it was Baillie who first revealed Assam to the East India Company. A dogged perseverance which is so characteristic of Scotchmen enabled Baillie to adhere to the one object of his life which entitles him to the credit of being the pioneer of English commerce in Assam." The story of the Company's relations with Assam, interwoven as it is with the zeal and ardour of the English pioneers in commerce, has been suffused with a rich glow of colour and incident.

The years 1771 to 1779 saw a decided advance in the way of establishing the Company's trade with Assam. As a result of Baillie's memorials of 1771, 1773 and 1776, the Court of Directors enjoined the Bengal Government to adopt measures for placing the trade on a proper footing. The enquiries of Baillie and Bogle and of the local officers supplied the Company with some information about the resources and trade of Assam. A complication was, however, introduced for the withdrawal of restrictions on the inland trade following the abolition of the Society of Trade in 1768 brought to the field a large number of European merchants with whom the Company's agents were required to compete. Hence we find many free merchants and adventurers trading in Assam in the period 1769-1779. Of these the most important were George Lear, Daniel Raush and William Dow. Besides these English merchants a number of Frenchmen resided at Goalpara carrying on trade with Assam, the most noted being Laval, Giblot and Campagnac. There were also a number of Indian merchants engaged in the Assam trade; the leading ones among them were Ganganaryan Roy, Sooberam Palit and Sunny Sarn Sarkar. The firm of Jagat Seths, the famous bankers of Murshidabad, had also trading concerns at Goalpara. The rivalries of these merchants belonging to different nationalities form an interesting study.

There were several phases in the Company's relations with Assam. Killican was granted in 1780 the exclusive privilege of the

Assam trade. The monopoly of trade evoked severe protests from private merchants and the concession was withdrawn in 1783. In 1787 Baillie was appointed Superintendent to regulate Assam Salt trade and he held this post till 1789. Then followed disturbances in Assam leading to British intervention. The province was the unfortunate victim of the depredations of the Bengal Burkendazes, of the rebellious Moamarias and of the predatory Singphos and the Ahom rulers of Assam were compelled to solicit the help of the Company to retain their authority. Lord Cornwallis sent an expedition under Captain Welsh to restore order in Assam, but his successor Sir John Shore who believed in a policy of non-intervention ordered the withdrawal of the British detachment before it could fully accomplish its task. The dissensions and quarrels among the Assamese continued and in 1822 the Burmese taking advantage of their weakness became masters of Assam. The British Government felt that the advance of the Burmese into Assam was a danger to the security of the Eastern frontier of their dominion in Bengal and decided to intervene. The British expelled the Burmese from Assam in 1824-25. Dr. Bhuyan rightly remarks, "A little courage, foresight and generosity on the part of Sir John Shore would have averted the thirty years of devastation which Assam suffered at the hands of Moamarias, Burkendazes and the Burmese". When the treaty of Yandabo was concluded in 1826 the British were masters of Assam. The Government decided to annex the occupied territory though the conquest of the province was unpremeditated.

Dr. Bhuyan's narrative of the Anglo-Assamese relations also contains a good deal of information regarding the internal conditions in Assam. He has critically examined the causes of the decline and fall of the Ahom kingdom. The Introductory chapter deals with the conditions under the Ahom rule in varied fields, including a description of the system of their government, their social outlook, religious policy, commercial policy and their relations with the hill tribes of Assam. Chapter X of the monograph is devoted to the beginnings of the British administration of Assam upto the time of David Scott's death in 1831. There are also two short, but interesting, appendices on the 'discovery of the tea plant' and 'survey and exploration' in Assam.

The Bibliography, which in itself is a work of great labour and erudition, contains a classified list of all sources, original and secondary, published and unpublished.

A map and an Index add much to the value of the book. The monograph is well printed and its get-up is quite attractive.

Dharm Pal

*The Lahore Darbar in the Light of the Correspondence of Sir C. M. Wade, 1823-1840* by R. R. Sethi. Punjab Government Record

Office Publications, Monograph No. 1,' (Simla, 1950; pp. x+402; Price Rs. 8/4).

THE story of Ranjit Singh how he produced order out of chaos in the Punjab and how he carved out a compact and powerful kingdom for himself and held it securely through a long reign—is one of the romances of history. Starting as a petty chief he soon became a power who could face the mighty East India Company on equal terms. The British found it to their advantage to cultivate the rising chief on their north-west frontier as a sort of shock-absorber between their dominion in India and Afghanistan, and Ranjit Singh in his turn though at first deeply suspicious of the ever-advancing tide of English supremacy realised before long that it would be in his interest to make friends rather than quarrel with his white neighbours.

The treaty of Amritsar (1809) marks the first definite landmark in Anglo-Sikh friendship. It confined the Sikh ruler's activities to the other side of the Sutlej, the British taking the cis-Sutlej states under their protection. Though Ranjit Singh was thus deprived of his most cherished dream of uniting the Khalsa under his banner, he took full advantage of the *carte blanche* given to him by this treaty so far as the region to the north-west of the Sutlej was concerned and within 20 years he became master of the entire territory from the Sutlej to the Khyber.

Anglo-Sikh relations continued to be satisfactory till 1823. But with Ranjit Singh's conquest of Multan, Attock and Kashmir, his victories over the Afghans and with his soldiers trained in European fashion, the British now considered the Sikh ruler as almost their rival in India. It was at this important stage in Anglo-Sikh relationship that Wade was posted at Ludhiana as Company's Political Agent. He remained at Ludhiana in that capacity for 17 years during which period he was the normal channel of communications between his Government and the Court of Lahore. Dr. Sethi has made a thorough study of Wade's voluminous correspondence and has attempted to reconstruct a history of Anglo-Sikh relations from 1823 to 1840 in his book. He has discussed in great detail several complicated disputes and claims of Ranjit Singh against some of the cis-Sutlej states and Wade's views regarding them, the Sikh Ruler's meeting with Lord William Bentinck in 1831, Burne's Mission to Kabul and Sikh-Afghan relations. He has devoted one full chapter to Wade's observations on the Lahore Darbar which shows how able, careful and accurate observer of men and events the British Political Agent was.

Dr. Sethi has told his story in greater detail than it has ever been told before ; and his narrative is reinforced by Wade's official correspondence which has not been used so extensively by historians so far. However, he has not presented the details of Anglo-Sikh diplomatic relations in as interesting a manner as would appeal to the general reader. This is perhaps due to the inherent limitations of his work, which was written for presentation as a thesis for doctorate. Again, Dr. Sethi is very badly served by his publishers. The printing, paper, get-up and maps could all have been better, and the printing errors

could certainly have been less. Still the final word should be one of appreciation. Dr. Sethi has carried out wide research: he has gone through old musty records in archives at Lahore and Delhi and has also examined a very large number of contemporary sources—printed as well as MSS, in English as well as in Persian. Nothing seems to be missed out, and it can be unhesitatingly said that Dr. Sethi has given us a scholarly volume which will remain a valuable source book of Anglo-Sikh history for a long time.

JAGMOHAN MAHAJAN

(1) *Mauritius Archives Bulletin*, No. 1 for 1948 (Port Louis, 1949; pp. 24; Price 75 cents).

(2) *Mauritius Archives Bulletin*, No. 2 for 1950 (Port Louis, 1951; pp. 29; Price 50 cents).

MAURITIUS, a British colony in the Indian Ocean had a chequered history in the 17th and 18th centuries. The island was under Dutch and later French occupation for over two centuries before it was finally ceded to the British in 1815 after a long and bitter Anglo-French conflict. These vicissitudes of fortune had disastrous results upon the archives of the island which were not only indiscriminately dispersed but were the victim of extensive purges and weedings out causing in their wake incalculable damage to the organic unity of the records.

*Bulletin* No. 1 opens with a short introduction tracing the history of the archives office in Mauritius. The archives appear to have faired very badly during the early years of the transition period. The office of the Archivist became the first victim of the retrenchment drive in 1831, resulting in the inevitable chaos and confusion that set in. In 1861 as a result of the recommendations of the Special Commission, weeding on an extensive scale resulted in irreperable damage to the archives. Though in 1893, Archives office had to be re-established, further economy drive which swept the island hit the young archives office the hardest. It was only in 1945 that the present archivist Mons. A. Toussaint took over and this marks the turning point in the affairs of Mauritius Archives. He is certainly to be congratulated for his efforts at restoring some sort of order in the island's archives and attempting to inculcate the much needed archive-consciousness among his people and at the same time dispelling the popular fallacy that archives are nothing but "a mortuary of musty papers kept in dark and smelly rooms for the sole benefit of a few grey-bearded men interested in things dead and gone".

Not the least important portion of *Bulletin* No. 1 is a brief report of the work accomplished during 1945-48. It shows the progress achieved in reorganisation, accession, preservation and maintenance and cataloguing and indexing of records. It is gratifying to learn that

Mauritius though a late entrant in the field of archives-keeping has made some very significant advances. Public access to colonial records has been extended to the year 1902. This clearly demonstrates the liberal trend of Mauritius Archives Office towards exploitation and use of records by research scholars and private enquirers.

A check list of Notarial Records given at the end of the *Bulletin* includes information on 211 notaries who worked in Mauritius and the Seychelles from 1728 to the present day.

*Bulletin* No. 2 contains a descriptive summary of materials preserved in the Mauritius Archives and should provide an admirable tool for students and scholars. The material described is divided into seven main classes corresponding to the seven divisions or sections of Archives Office—administrative, domainial, judicial, statistical, bibliographical, cartographical and pictorial, each of which includes several groups. Under each group the description of the records is preceded by brief notes on the agencies that produced them. Even this generalized account gives the impression of a wealth of untapped research material relating to the French Revolution and its repurcussions in Mauritius, slavery and its abolition, Indian immigration into Mauritius and a wide variety of economic, political and sociological topics. The *Bulletin* also includes a short survey of various censuses held in Mauritius since the beginning of French rule.

The Archivist proposes to publish an Archives Bulletin every year. Subsequent issues will be awaited with keen interest.

DHANWANTI G. KESWANI

*Fifteenth Annual Report of the Archivist of the United States for the year ending June 30, 1949;* National Archives Publication No. 50-5 (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1950; pp. 57).

NINETEEN-FORTYNINE was a year of significant change in the organizational make-up of the National Archives. On July 1, 1949 the Establishment became a part of the newly created General Services Administration and this marked the end of its independent existence.

The report under review lays great emphasis on the management and control of the Federal Government records by the National Archives which have been accumulating at an alarming speed and unless controlled adequately and efficiently will create a problem beyond human solution. The National Archives has attempted to solve this enormous problem by advocating the establishment of records administration programmes by the Federal agencies which require a survey and appraisal of all records accumulated by an agency, prompt disposal of useless material and orderly retirement of records of continuing value. War-time conditions and lack of clear authority to exercise supervisory staff leadership in the field of current records impeded the progress of work. Happily, the establishment of the

General Services Administration has resolved this ambiguous situation and the new establishment can now supply full leadership in records management.

One of the most impressive achievements of the National Archives is the orderly and selective retirement between 1935-49 of all the non-current valuable records of the Government from 1789 to 1930. The holdings on June 30, 1949 totalled a dizzy figure of 894,857 cubic feet which "constitute one of the largest and most important centralized collections of modern Archives in the world". This colossal volume of records does not include 741,000 maps and 854 atlases, 37,000,000 running feet of motion picture film, approximately 2000,000 still pictures and 3000,000 recordings in the custody of the archivist. Of special interest among recent accessions are the films showing the ceremonies and parade at the inauguration of Harry S. Truman as President on January 20, 1949 and recordings of certain propaganda broadcasts made during World War II in different languages.

The preservation programme of the National Archives has been restricted to repair and rehabilitation of only those documents which are in imminent danger of disintegration. Lamination as a method of rehabilitating brittle and damaged paper still holds the field in America as no other process has yet been evolved which can rival it in adaptability, efficiency and economy. The experiments regarding the application of the process which are conducted at the National Archives are keenly watched in India, as she is one of the very few countries which has acquired the necessary equipment to laminate records.

It was by no means a barren year in the production of finding aids. A significant achievement of the National Archives which has been hailed as "an event of major importance for scholarship" and which meets a long-felt demand is the new *Guide to the Records in the National Archives.* It embodies a description of nearly 250 groups of records covering 8000,000 cubic feet of records. Inventory work too was taken up in right earnest without which the bulk of material would otherwise remain inaccessible to the public. During the year 16 preliminary inventories were published as against 1 in the previous year. Other publications during the year included, *National Archives Accessions* and *Information Circulars.* The preparation of the *Guide to the Records of Federal Agencies of World War II* to be published in two volumes made considerable progress during the year.

Once again the reference services performed by the National Archives speak volumes of the use to which the Central Government archives are put to. On an average 1,200 requisitions requiring specialized professional and technical knowledge, were supplied every day. Ever-increasing use of the archives for scholarly research purposes is also abundantly evident from the fact that several books based on records in the Archives Building were published during the year.

The National Archives and Records Service, as the new organization is designated, exercises control over the Division of the Federal

Register also where its activities were concentrated on the 1949 edition of the *Code of Federal Regulations.* The concept of the code has been broadened to include material which was not published in the 1938 edition.

The report concludes with five appendices, the first one detailing the recent legislation concerning the National Archives. America is forging ahead in developing the young science of Archives Keeping and Records Management and the new entrants in the field can learn much from its experiences garnered in its annual reports.

DHANWANTI G. KESWANI

*Preliminary Report on the Old Records of the Assam Secretariat* by S. K. Bhuyan (Shillong, Assam Government Press, 1951 ; pp. iii + 85).

THIS valuable report was drawn up more than a score of years ago by the eminent historian of Assam, Dr. S. K. Bhuyan, at the request of the Provincial Government. Its publication, even though belated, will be welcomed by all those who are interested in the preparation and proper utilization of archives in India.

Dr. Bhuyan made a preliminary survey of the 'old records' in the Assam Secretariat in 1929-30 in connection with the Government's scheme for the preparation and publication of a suitable catalogue of these records. The term 'old record' as applied to the archives of the Assam Government connotes the records beginning from 1823, when David Scott, Commissioner of Rangpur, was appointed as Agent to the Governor-General on the Eastern Frontier, to 1874 when Assam became a separate province under a Chief Commissioner. Assam was annexed to the East India Company's dominions in 1826 according to the terms of the treaty of Yandabo. The author has rightly suggested that these records should more appropriately be designated as 'Agency Records' of the Assam Secretariat as the province was upto the year 1874 under the control of the Agent to the Governor-General. The value of the records as source material for history is undoubtedly great for they present a homogenous series throwing light on the events leading to the annexation of Assam and its development under the guiding control of the Central Government. They are also of considerable administrative use as they pertain to a number of subjects of continuing interest, too numerous to be listed here.

The introductory chapter of the Report is devoted to the description of the condition of these records in 1930 and it is safe to presume that lapse of twenty years has not brought about any material change in this respect. The author has given short definitions of various archival finding media such as List, Catalogue, Press List, Calendar and Handbook and has discussed their relative advantages. The plan of the proposed Handbook given by him follows very closely the subject arrangement in *Handbook of the Records of the Govern-*

*ment of India in the Imperial Record Department, 1748-1858* (Calcutta, 1925).

A large section of the report relates to proposals for the compilation of a press-list which is regarded as essential to help the utilization of these records both by scholars and administrators. Great emphasis has been laid by Dr. Bhuyan, and with full justification, on the advantages of press-listing. In view of the small bulk of the records involved in the scheme it should not be impossible to have their complete press-lists within a reasonably short time. It may be pointed out that the preparation of other forms of finding aids, e.g., indexes, is an equally difficult and a laborious task as the compilation of press-lists and there is hardly any justification for discouraging the latter on the plea of long time taken for their compilation.

The Report also contains some proposals regarding the preservation of old records and suggestions for their transcription and printing have been made in this connection. In the light of recent advances made in the field of photo-duplication and its application to archives it should be more advisable to make their copies on micro-film. This method is cheap apart from ensuring complete accuracy in duplication.

In two valuable appendices, covering about half the volume of the publication, are given sample press-list of *Letters received from the Government, Vol. II, 1823-24* and *Index* to this press-list to show the nature of the work involved in the scheme. It is hoped that the present Government of Assam will take advantage of the labours of Dr. Bhuyan by giving a practical shape to the proposals contained in the Report.

V. C. Joshi

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## ERRATA

Attention is called to three printing errors in the article on "The Custody of Records in Roman Egypt" by Sir Harold Idris Bell, published in *The Indian Archives,* Vol. IV, No. 2. (July-December 1950):

| *Page* | *Line* | *For* | *Read* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 121 | 5 | had | has |
| 123 | 10 | delete *and* between destroyed and sealed | |
| 124 | 5 | Egytian | Egyptian |

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